TWILIGHT TALES

KING OF BANDITS

王ドロボウJING™

YUICHI KUMAKURA

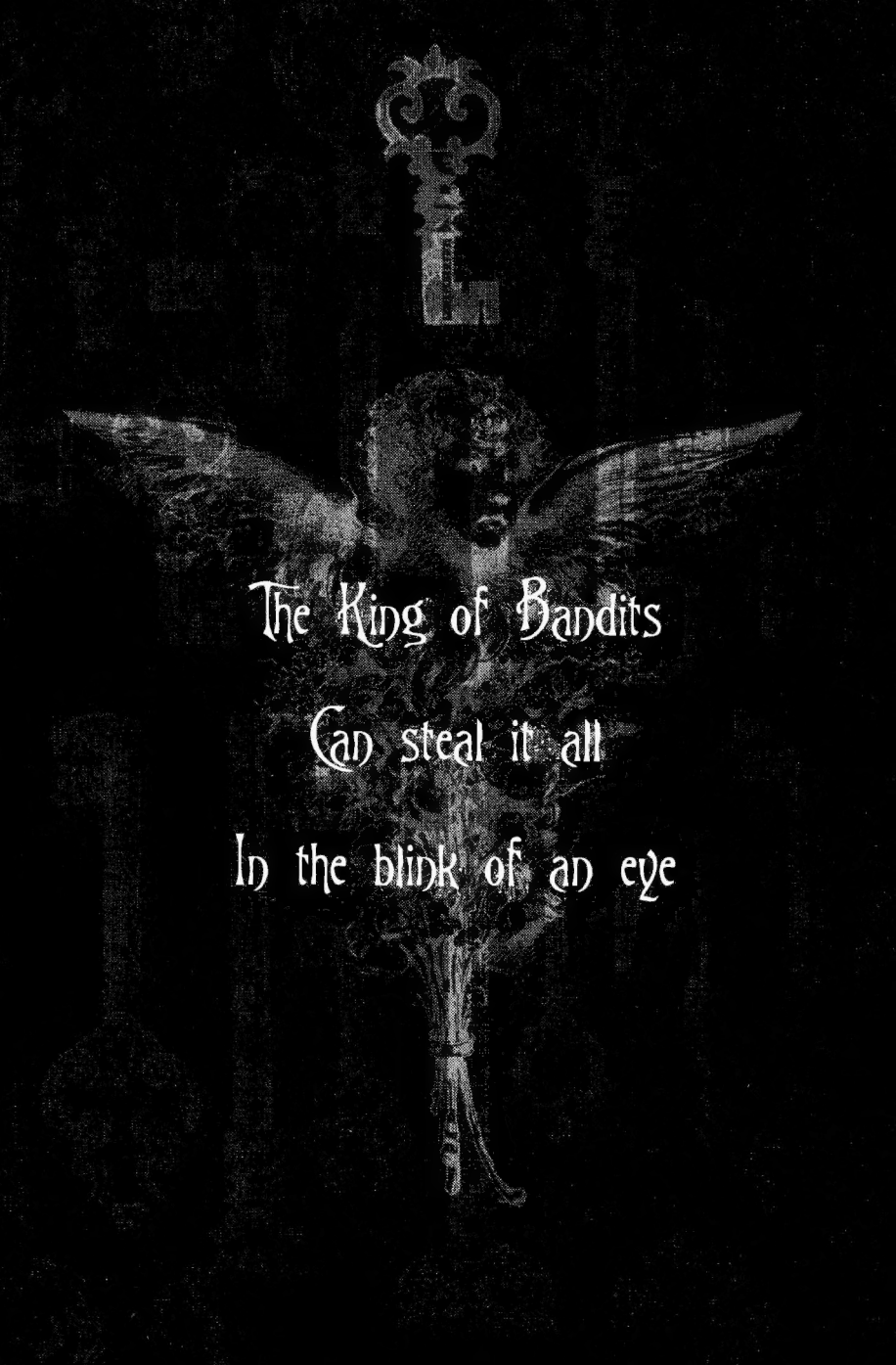
TOKYOPOP

All that glitters...

Even the stars

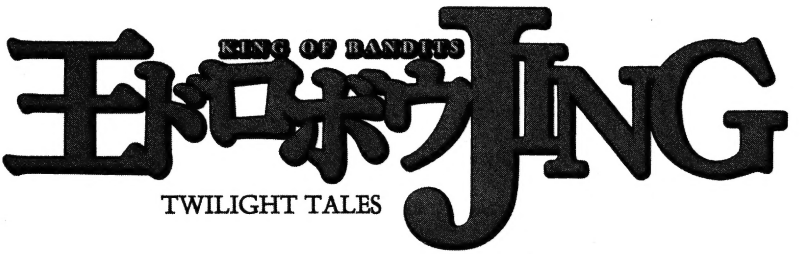
All things precious...

Even your life


The King of Bandits
Can steal it all
In the blink of an eye

53‡‡•305))6*;482
4‡.)4‡);.....
A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat
.....
806*;48•8¶60))85;1
‡(;1‡(;1‡.....
forty-one degrees
and thirteen minutes

The Merry Widow Banquet



VOLUME 6

STORY AND ART BY
YUICHI KUMAKURA

TOKYOPOP®

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Created by Yuichi Kumakura

Translation - Alexis Kirsch
English Adaptation - Peter Ahlstrom
Copy Editor - Hope Donovan
Retouch and Lettering - Vicente Rivera, Jr.
Production Artists - Fawn Lau and Lucas Rivera
Cover Design - Kyle Plummer

Editor - Paul Morrissey
Digital Imaging Manager - Chris Buford
Production Managers - Jennifer Miller and Mutsumi Miyazaki
Managing Editor - Lindsey Johnston
Publisher and E.I.C. - Mike Kiley
VP of Production - Ron Klamert
President and C.O.O. - John Parker
C.E.O. - Stuart Levy

A TOKYOPOP® Manga

TOKYOPOP Inc.
5900 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036

E-mail: info@TOKYOPOP.com
Come visit us online at www.TOKYOPOP.com

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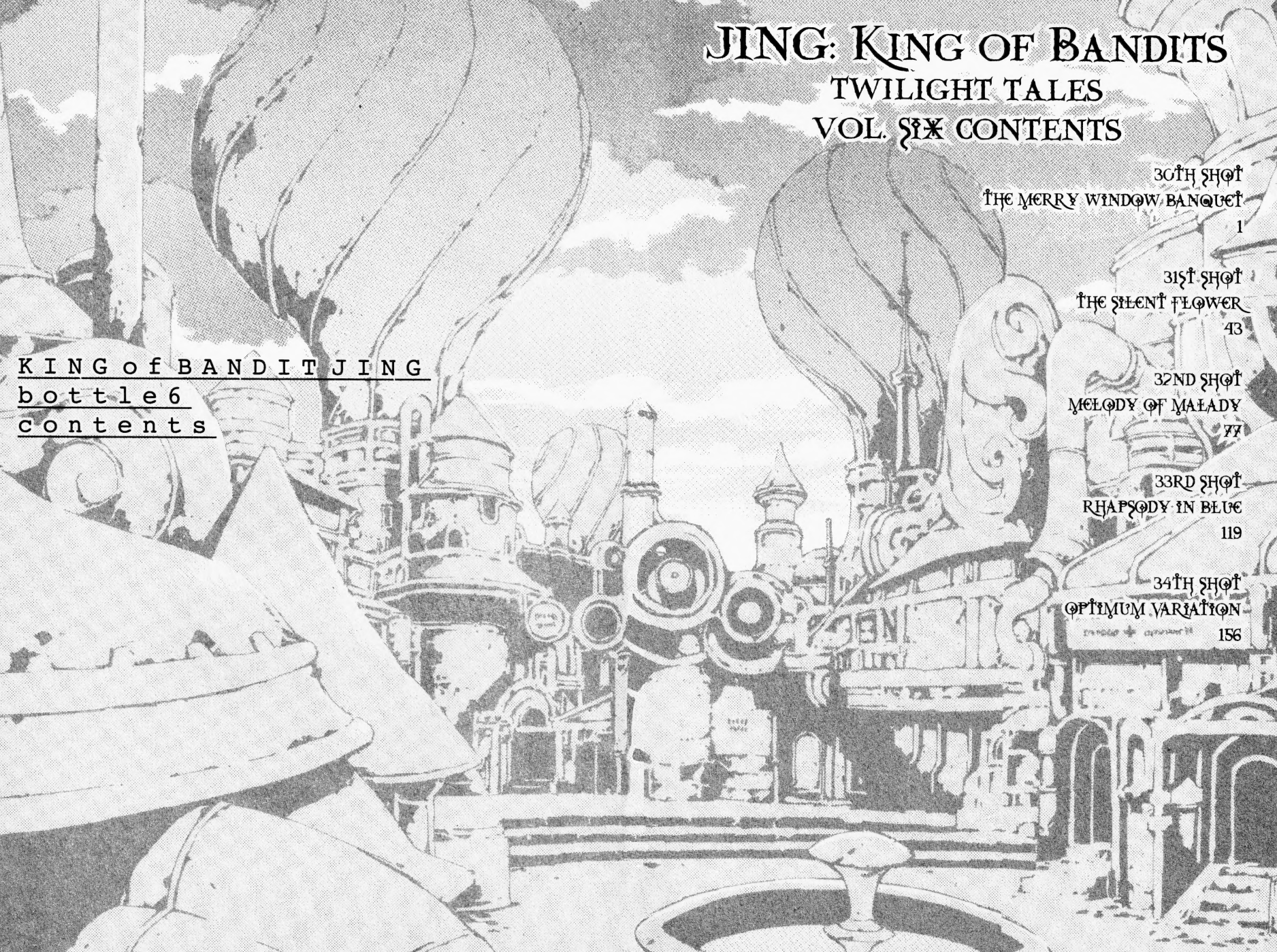
Once upon a midnight dreary, a thief named Jing was weak and weary.
Many strange and forgotten lands he did traverse and did explore.
His companion was a bird, an odd one name of Kir
Who possessed a strange vocation, a less than honest occupation.
"Wake up, Jing" Kir muttered, "all around is loot galore!"

Thus this ebony bird's wiling, changed Jing's sadness into willing
As he set about to do the thing he truly did adore.
So the albatross sat proudly on Jing's placid bust sang loudly
While his beady eyes explored the treasure stacked upon the floor.
One more thing that Kir did utter, his feathers all a greedy flutter
And his voice commenced a terrible dull roar,
Quoth the albatross, "let's steal some more!"



JING: KING OF BANDITS
TWILIGHT TALES
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bottle6
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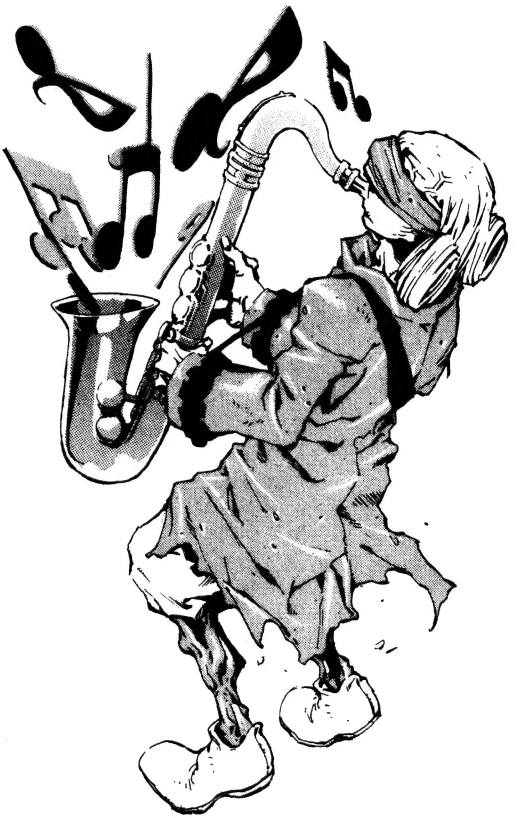


AFTER BEING NEARLY WIPED OFF THE MAP DURING A TERRIBLE BATTLE KNOWN AS THE WAR OF GRAMMAR...
...THIS PLACE WAS ABLE TO REVITALIZE ITSELF THROUGH MUSIC AND THE INSTRUMENTS THAT CREATE IT.
THE MIRACULOUS CITY, MERRY WIDOW!

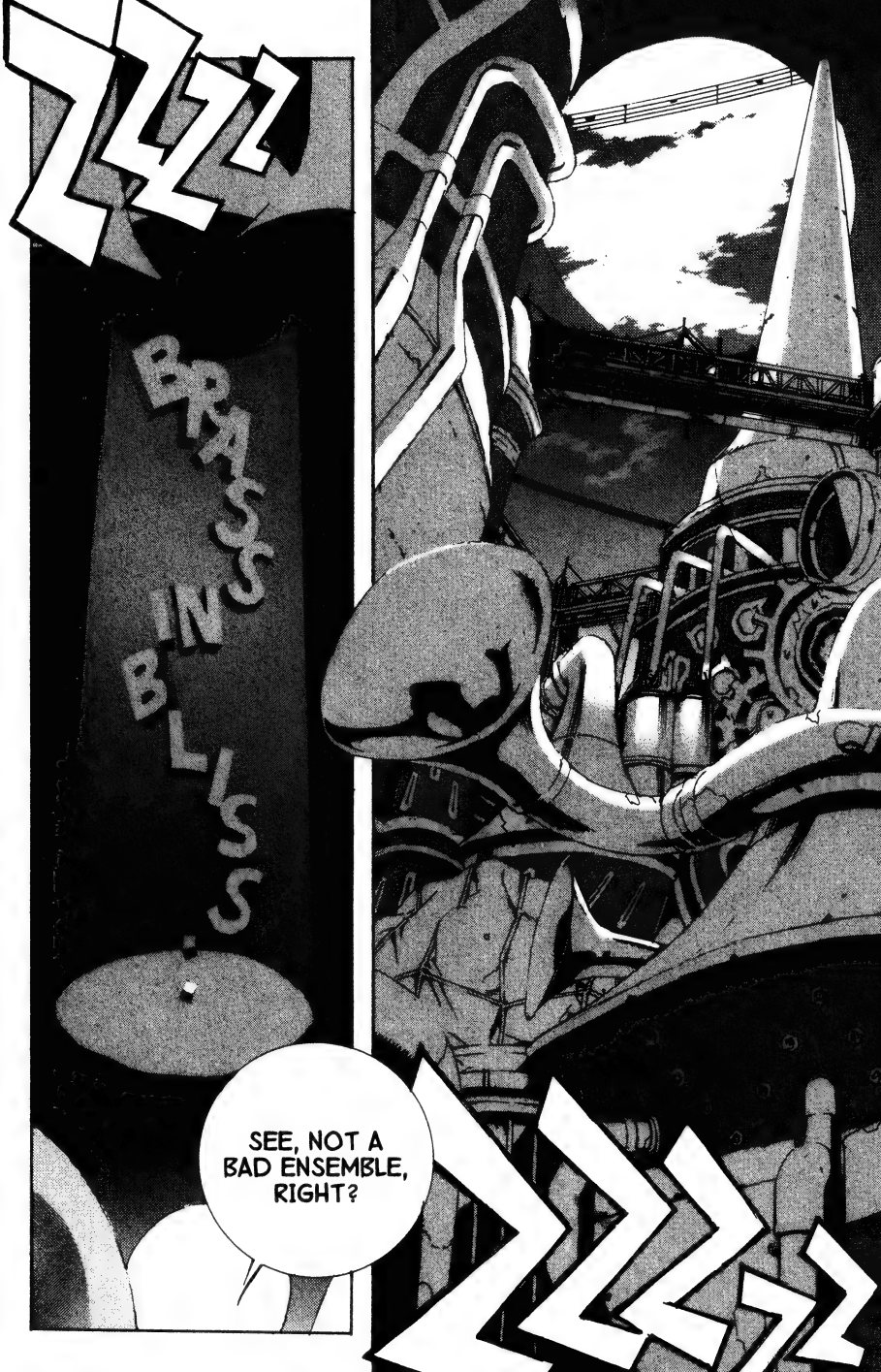
30th SHOT - The Merry Widow Banquet

AND UP THERE...
...IS THE MAN WHO'S CONDUCTED THE CITY THUS FAR--
EYGUEBELLE!

NOURISHING PARCHED BODIES WITH MELODY, LIFTING TIRED SOULS WITH RHYTHM...
...PRODUCING SOUNDS NEVER BEFORE EXPERIENCED...
...HE'S MADE PEACE AVAILABLE ONCE MORE IN THE MARKETPLACE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

THIS WHOLE STREET IS ACTUALLY ONE GIANT BRASS INSTRUMENT!

WAAA


ZZZ
BRASS
BIN
BRASS
SEE, NOT A BAD ENSEMBLE, RIGHT?

YEAH, FEELS LIKE I'M IN A DREAM.
IT'S THE SNORE-HORN.
BUT WHAT WE'RE AFTER ALSO SOUNDS LIKE THE STUFF OF DREAMS.
YEAH...BUT IT'S APPARENTLY REAL--AN INSTRUMENT THAT CANNOT BE SEEN, YET PRODUCES A BEAUTIFUL SOUND--
HOW CAN AN INSTRUMENT EXIST THAT CAN BE HEARD BUT NOT SEEN?

THE INVISIBLE!!
Now you see it, now you don't.
AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO STEAL.
. . . . . !!!
YOU THINK I CAN'T SEE THROUGH YOUR BOGUS TRICKS?!!
It's so obvious!

PLUS, EVERYONE IN THIS CITY THINKS SO HIGHLY OF THEMSELVES...
I DON'T SEE ONE WIDOW, OR EVEN ANY SINGLE GIRLS.
NYOKI
MERRY WIDOW? THEY SHOULD CALL THIS PLACE MERRY IDIOTS...
SCREW THE ULTIMATE INSTRUMENT! BRING ME A FINELY TUNED...

HIP
HOP
...
GIRL
!!

SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
HOLD ON, GUYS!! L-LET'S TALK IT OVER! HEY!
AAAH!!
HWANG PWANG

SOME-THING...
CAME OUT...
;)!!!!
&)£
KIR, WHAT DID YOU JUST--?
UHH... I DUNNO! I JUST SCREAMED, AND...

..MY DEEP DESIRE TO SAVE YOU WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A SCREAM FROM THE SOUL, BABY. ♡
SO! ANY IDEA WHY THOSE THUGS WERE AFTER YOU? WERE THEY HITTING ON YOU...?
OH, THERE'S A SIMPLE EXPLANATION FOR THAT.
IT'S BECAUSE I TRIED TO KILL EYGUEBELLE.
YEAH, YEAH. SO HOW 'BOUT WE...

WHAT?!! KILL HIM?!!!!
I MEAN, SURE THAT NOISE IS A PAIN IN THE EARDRUMS, BUT KILLING HIM IS KINDA...
NO, THAT'S NOT THE REASON.
I'M TRYING TO KILL HIM BECAUSE...

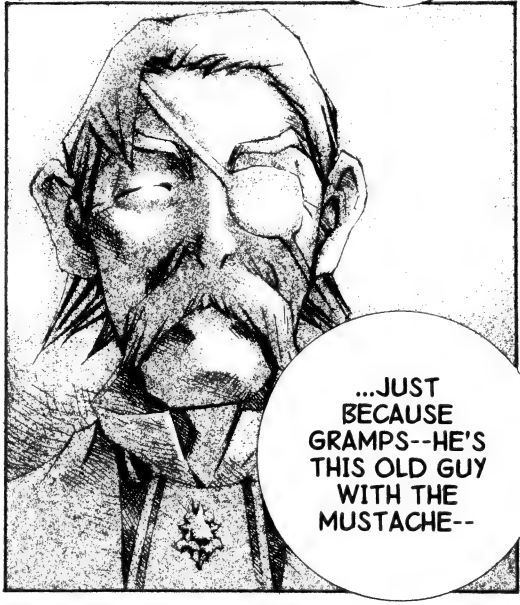
...HE MASSACRED ALL OF MY FRIENDS!

giggle,rage,
weeeep!!!!!!♪♫
♫♪
YOU CAN GET ANGRY ON THE WEST SIDE AND HAPPY ON THE EAST...♪♪
♪♫
...BUT NO TEARS IN CITY LIMITS!!
♪♪

THESE ARE MY FRIENDS--
THE CHILDREN OF THE PASSION FLOWER CHOIR.
A CHOIR! HEY, YOU GOT ROOM FOR ANOTHER TENOR?!

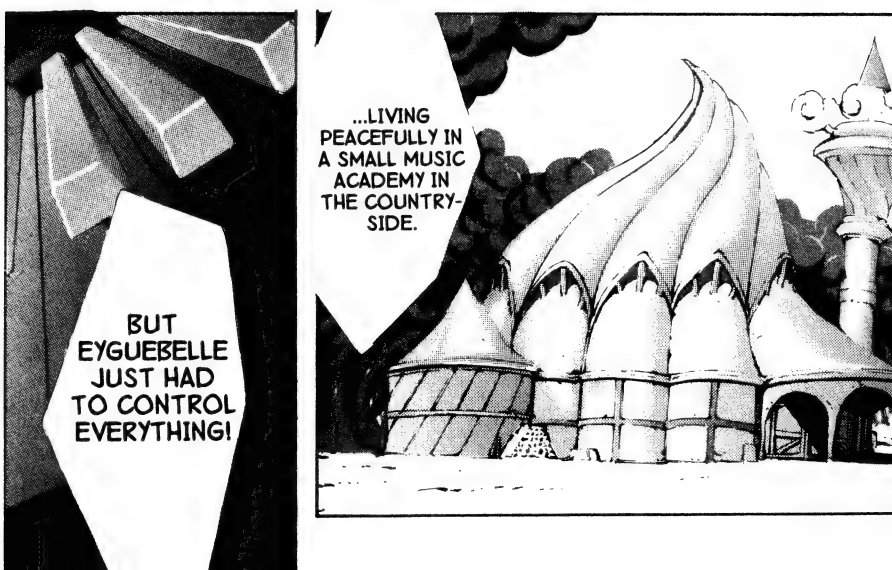
--KNEW THE SECRETS BEHIND THE CREATION OF THE INVISIBLE.

BUT EVERYTHING CAME CRASHING DOWN...

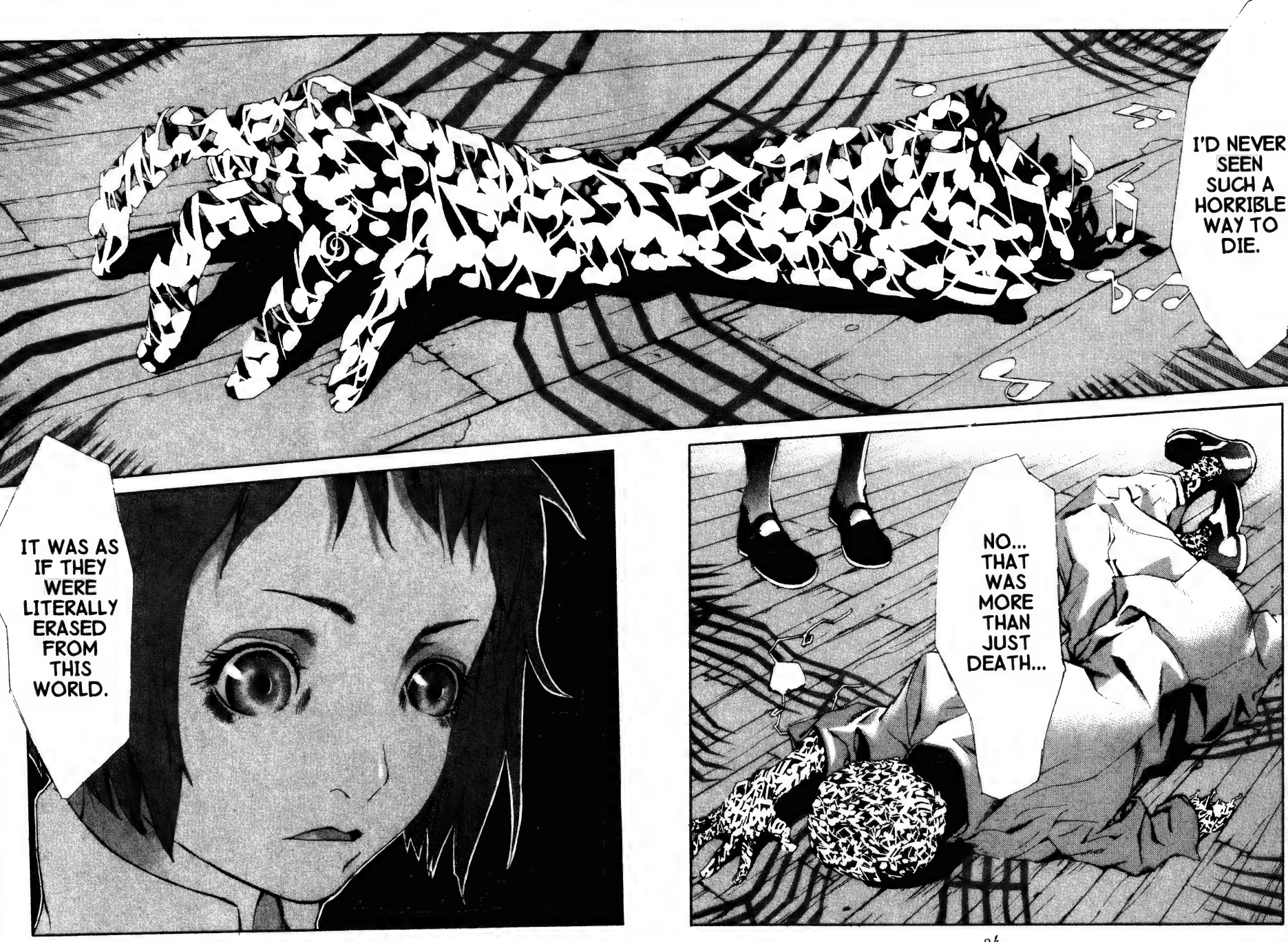

...JUST BECAUSE GRAMPS--HE'S THIS OLD GUY WITH THE MUSTACHE--

WE DIDN'T KNOW A THING ABOUT OR EVEN CARE ABOUT THE ULTIMATE INSTRUMENT.

WE JUST ENJOYED SINGING THE MYSTERIOUS SONGS THAT GRAMPS WOULD CREATE...


...LIVING PEACEFULLY IN A SMALL MUSIC ACADEMY IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE.
BUT EYGUEBELLE JUST HAD TO CONTROL EVERYTHING!

BECAUSE OF THAT, HE MASSACRED EVERYONE WHO HE COULD ESTABLISH HAD ANY CONNECTION WITH THE INVISIBLE'S CREATION.
AS IF THOSE KIDS WERE ANY THREAT TO HIM.
BUT ONE DAY, WHEN I RETURNED FROM RUNNING SOME ERRANDS...
...EVERYONE HAD BEEN WIPED OUT!


I'D NEVER SEEN SUCH A HORRIBLE WAY TO DIE.
NO... THAT WAS MORE THAN JUST DEATH...
IT WAS AS IF THEY WERE LITERALLY ERASED FROM THIS WORLD.

THEY WERE ERASED... NO, THAT'S NOT QUITE RIGHT...
YET ALL AROUND THE ACADEMY WAS STRANGELY QUIET...
IT'S LIKE THEY WERE PAINTED OVER WITH A DIZZYING, ROARING SOUND!

...AS IF ALL SOUND HAD BEEN REDUCED BACK TO ITS ORIGINS.
DEAD SILENCE...
.....
.....

YEAH, BUT...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE SOMETHING THAT HORRIBLE BEING CONNECTED TO A PLACE AS HAPPY AS THIS TOWN...
IF YOU WANNA BE HAPPY FOREVER, HIT THE EAST SIDE AFTER DARK!
fury!! smily!!! & cry,cry!!!
WHAT I JUST TOLD YOU REVEALS THE TRUE HIDDEN IDENTITY...
...OF THE WIDOW WHO ONLY SEEMS MERRY.

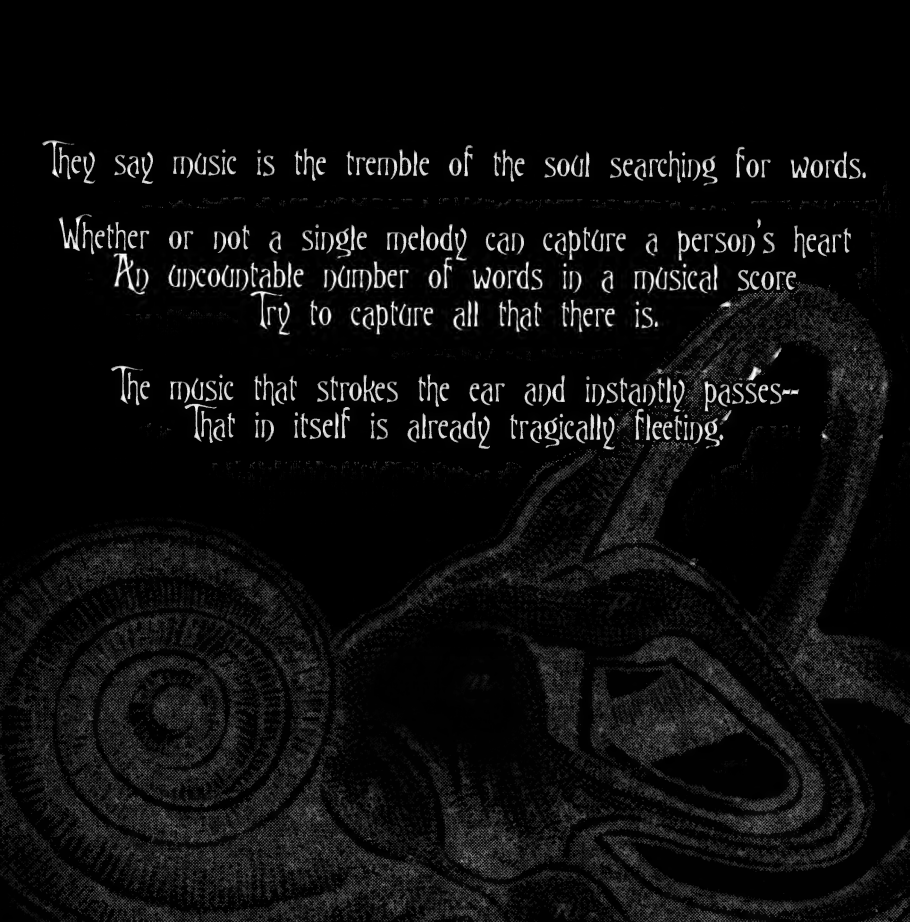
THAT'S WHY, IN ORDER TO RIP THAT MASK OFF THIS HAPPY-FACED CITY...
...AND TO GET MY REVENGE ON EYGUEBELLE...
...I'M GOING TO DESTROY THE INVISIBLE.
...whether I can see it or not.
CLACK
I SEE... WELL, THEN...

The Merry Widow Banquet - END

They say music is the tremble of the soul searching for words.

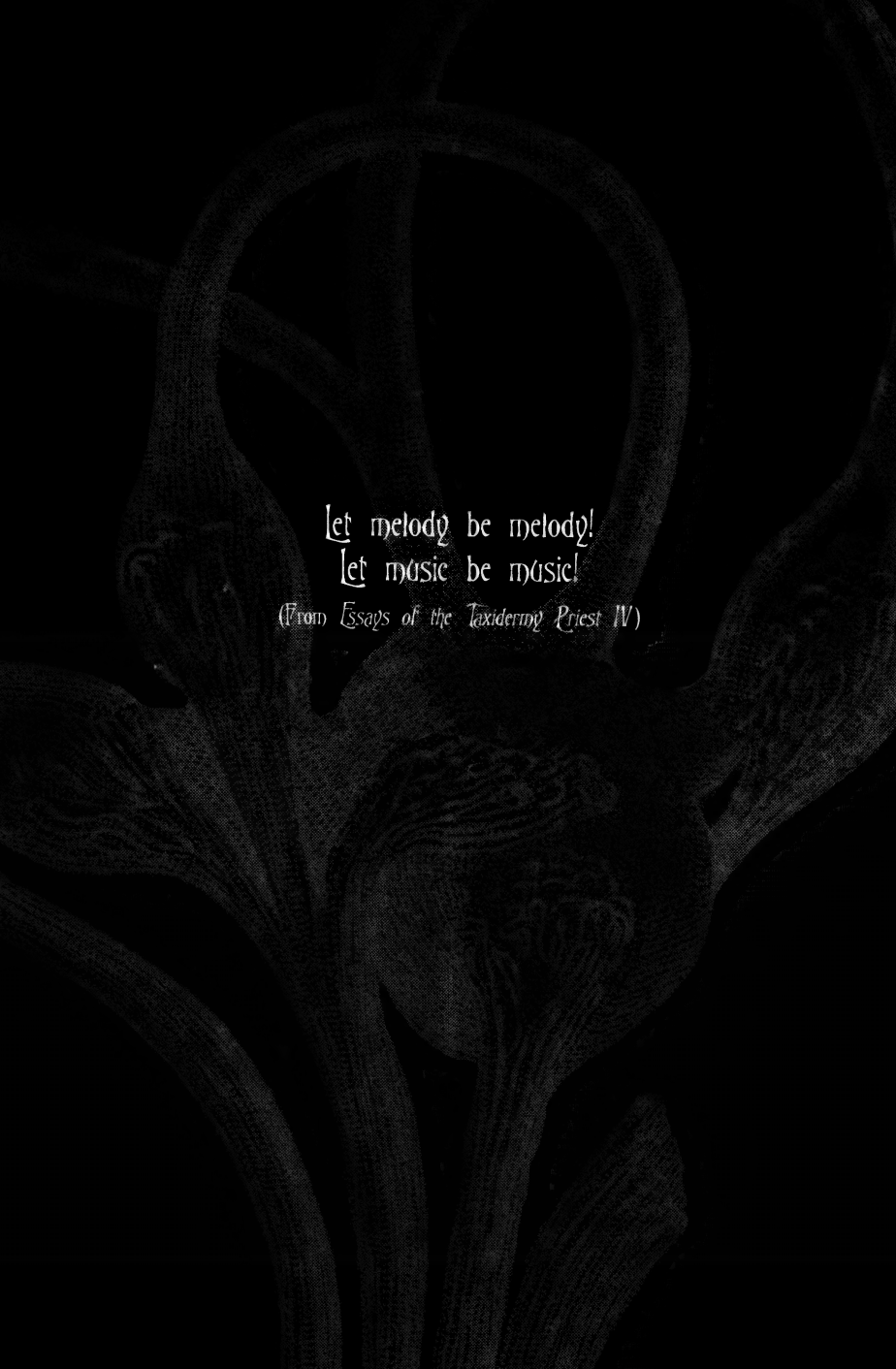
Whether or not a single melody can capture a person's heart
An uncountable number of words in a musical score
Try to capture all that there is.

The music that strokes the ear and instantly passes--
That in itself is already tragically fleeting.



Each of those words is correct without exaggeration
And each of those words is incorrect.

That's why
Carelessly attaching words to music
Is to carelessly bring tragedy to flesh and blood.



Let melody be melody!
Let music be music!
(From *Essays of the Taxidermy Priest IV*)

THE THREE MAISTERZINGERS?
YEAH. THEY'RE THIS CITY'S FOREMOST INSTRUMENT CREATORS AND PERFORMERS.
FLP FLP FLP
HEY HEY
HERE'S THE THREE OF THEM.

EYGUEBELLE, GRAMPS...AND BARDINET.
I GET IT-- YOU'RE GONNA TRY TO COZY UP TO BARDINET NEXT, RIGHT?
YUP!
THESE THREE ARE ALSO THE ONES WHO CREATED THE INVISIBLE.
I-invisible?!
VROOM

SOMEONE ELSE SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO COZY UP TO YOU...
RUB RUB
RUB
HOPEFULLY THAT'LL GET ME SOME CLUES ABOUT THE INVISIBLE.
Clues, clues...
YEAH!
GWAH!
Cut it out, Kir!
UMM... IT'S THIS WAY...
LET'S GO!!
A-ALL RIGHT... I'VE GOT IT ALL FIGURED OUT NOW...

ESPECIALLY FOR A SPECIAL CONCERT LIKE THIS.
INTER-ESTING ENTRANCE...
DIDN'T YOU KNOW V.I.P.S ALWAYS ENTER THROUGH A SECRET ENTRANCE?
Ouch..
THIS BETTER NOT BE DANGEROUS.

YEP. THIS IS A SECRET CONCERT FOR JUST A SELECT FEW.
BARDINET'S GOING TO PERFORM HERE?
GACHA
THE MUSICIANS HURT IN THE WAR OF GRAMMAR PERFORM HERE ONCE A MONTH TO SHOW OFF THEIR SKILLS.
PLUS, THIS PLACE IS BUILT ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T BEAR TO SHOW THEIR WAR SCARS IN PUBLIC.
THE WORLD'S ONLY...

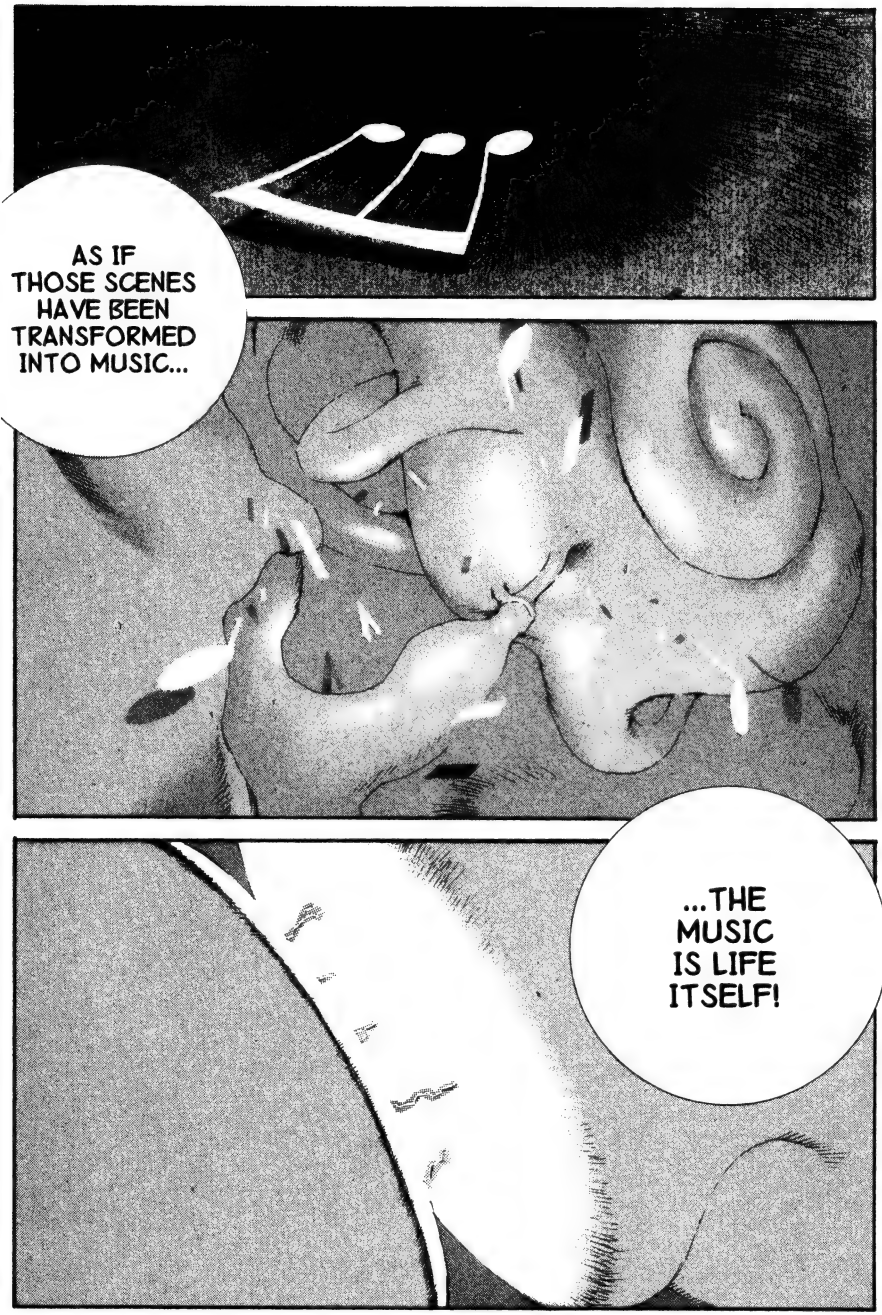
...FACELESS CONCERT!!

RATTLE
ALL YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW IS LISTEN.
THIS IS A PLACE WHERE SIGHT LOSES TO SOUND.
IT'S MAKING MY EARDRUMS TREMBLE...

THEY ALWAYS PLAY THE SAME SONG...
...A REQUIEM TO LAMENT THE COUNTRY DESTROYED BY WAR--
THE ARIA OF THE WAR OF WORDS!

TAK
TAK
TAK

LIKE SOMEONE WHOSE HEART DIES BEFORE THEIR BODY.
ANGER, SADNESS, FEAR... ALL EMOTIONS ARE FROZEN IN PLACE.
LIKE A LAND THAT'S LOST ITS SOUL AND IS NOW BUT A SHELL.


AS IF THOSE SCENES HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO MUSIC...
...THE MUSIC IS LIFE ITSELF!

...SO THAT VISIONS EVEN APPEAR IN YOUR MIND.
AND IT CONTROLS THE EARS AND EVEN THE EYES...

BOO HOO...

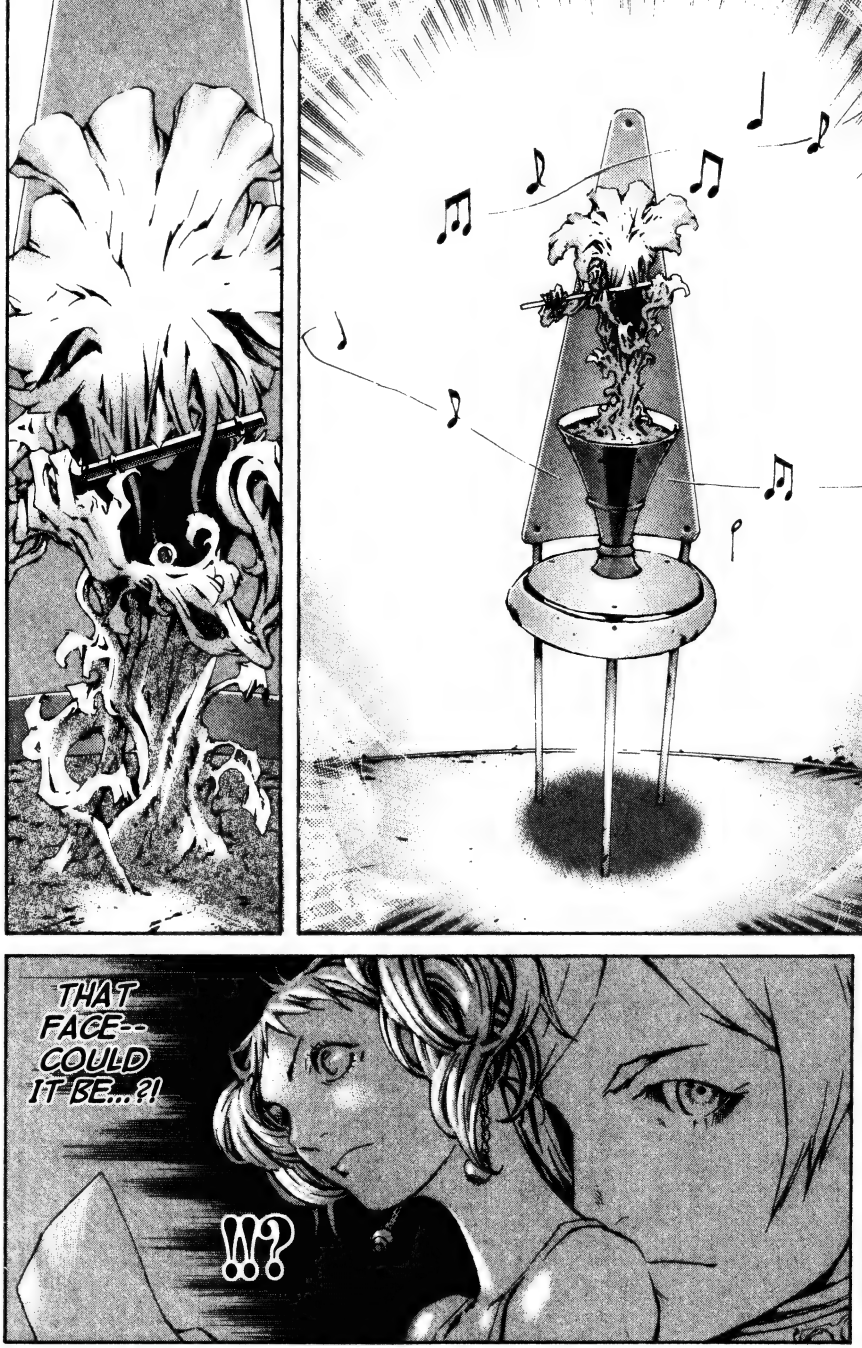
ALL RIGHT, IT'S SHOW-TIME!
SO THE DIVINE MELODY IS JUST BEGINNING, EH?
COME ON! FROM HERE ON WE NEED OUR SENSES OF SIGHT, HEARING, SMELL AND TASTE...
H-HOLD ON!
ALL FIVE SENSES FOR SEARCHING, THEN?

THE FLUTE! THE TALL GUY HOLDING THE FLUTE!
HEY, HE'S GOING INTO THE MUSIC SHOP!
TH-THAT'S HIM!
MR. BARDINET!

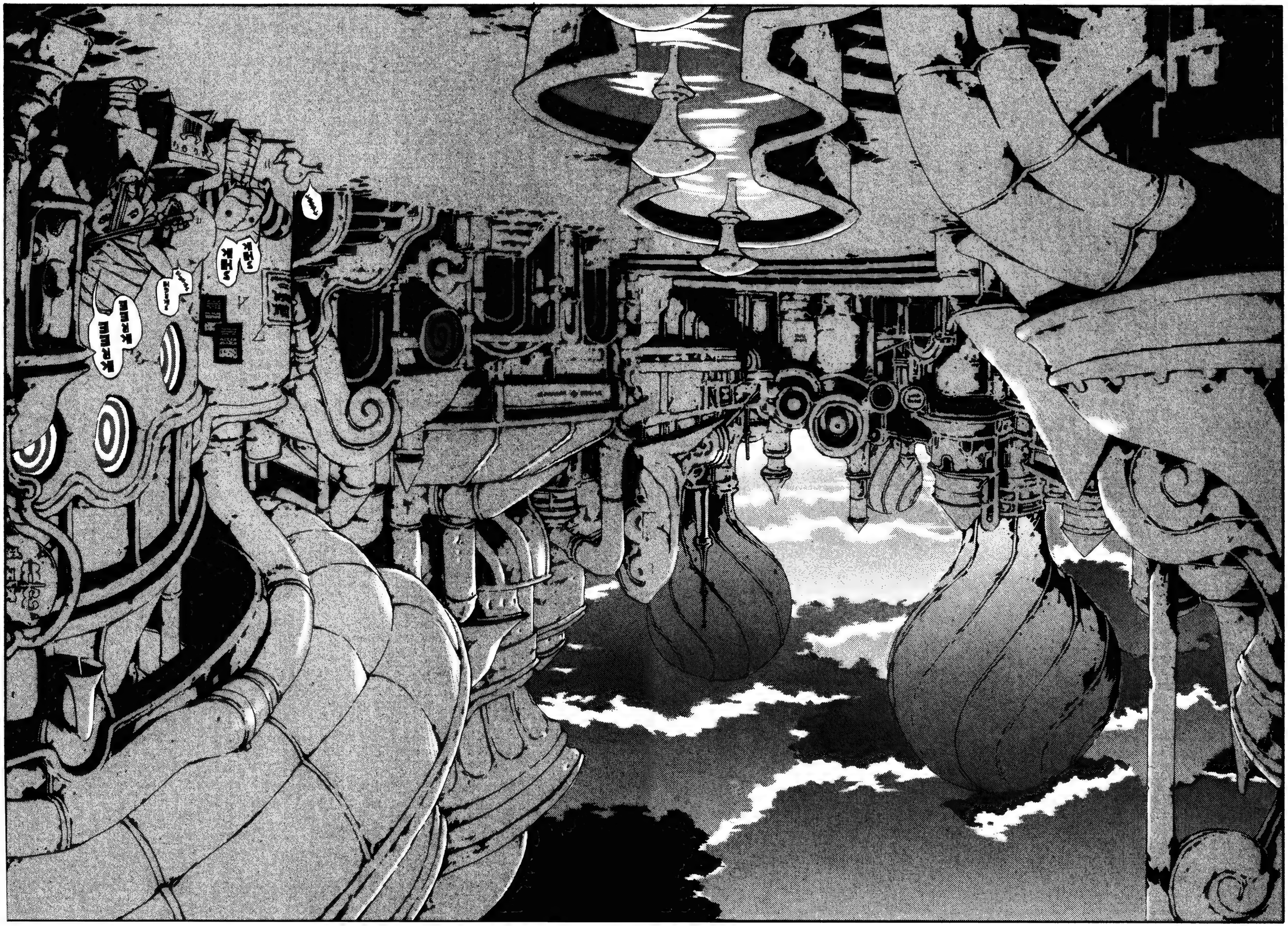
TAKE ME TO EYGUEBELLE! COME ON, TAKE ME RIGHT NOW!!
OR ELSE!
THUMP!
UH... AAA... AAH...
UOOO!

NOW, BREAK!!
ALL RIGHT!
HOW ABOUT SOME ADAGIO FROM NOW ON?
Nice and slow.
!!!

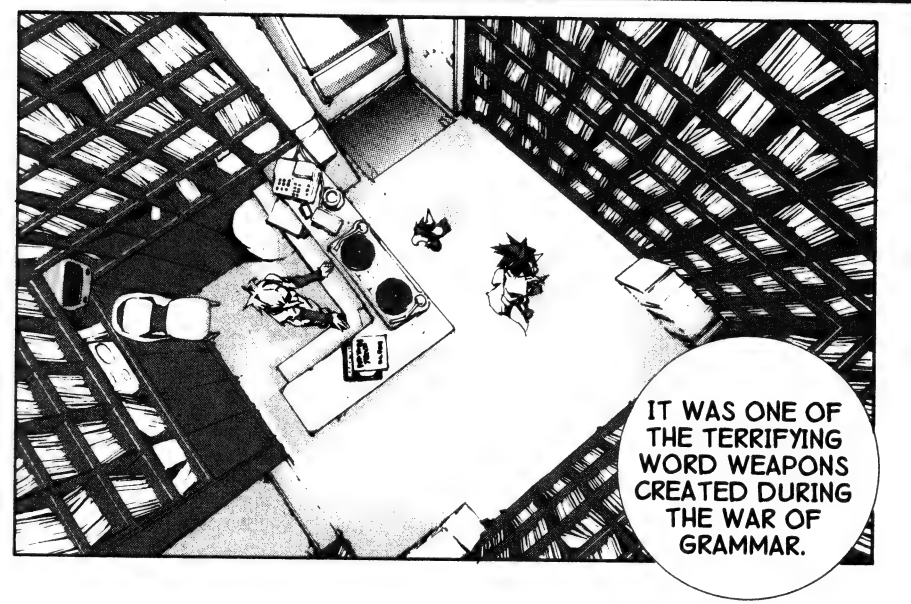
...THIS IS MY SONG! GRAMPS WROTE IT...
"ALIZE DRESSED IN MELODY."


THAT FACE-- COULD IT BE...?!
!!?

TH-THIS IS BARDINET?!


KRUM
KRUM
KRUM
KRUM

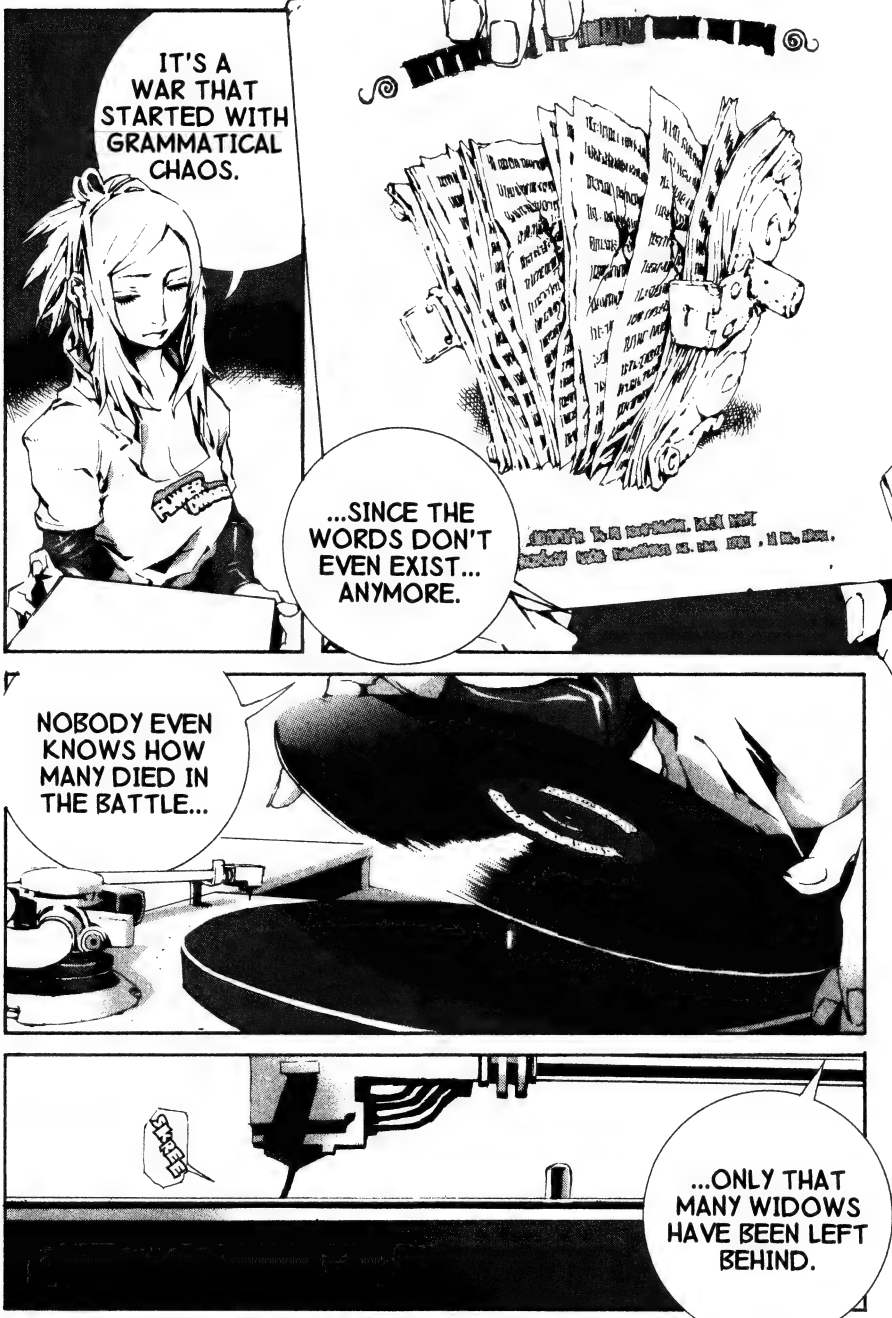
FLOWER CHILDREN
FLOWER CHILDREN
9
A HORRIBLE ATTACK TURNED THE MASTER INTO THAT...


IT WAS ONE OF THE TERRIFYING WORD WEAPONS CREATED DURING THE WAR OF GRAMMAR.

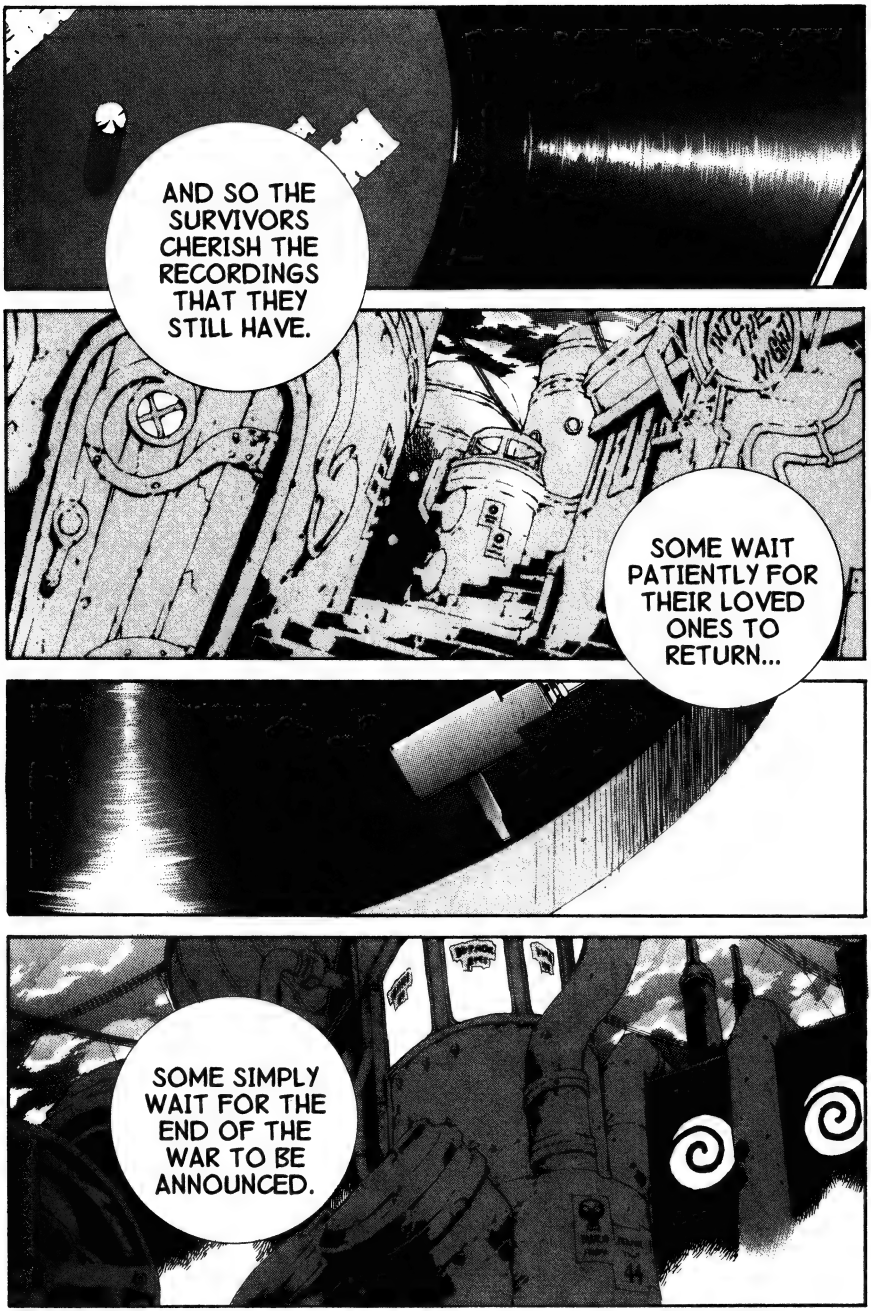
THE POISONOUS WORDS REACH YOUR CELLS EVEN BEFORE THEY SHAKE YOUR EARDRUM...
IT FORCIBLY TRANSLATES EVEN THE BODY'S LANGUAGE...
...CHANGING IT INTO A SPELL NOBODY CAN UNDERSTAND...

...AND THE VICTIMS ARE ALL RESHAPED INTO ANOTHER LIFE FORM...
...IF YOU CAN CALL IT THAT.
WHAT THE?! ME SO CONFUSED! IF IT'S NOT A LIFE FORM, THEN WHAT? FORM LIFE?!
NOBODY UNDERSTANDS IT... PROBABLY...

HOW IT HURTS... HOW IT IS HURT...
HOW IT STARTED... HOW IT CONTINUES...
IT'S NOT EVEN POSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN THE FIGHTING TO OTHER PEOPLE...


IT'S A WAR THAT STARTED WITH GRAMMATICAL CHAOS.
...SINCE THE WORDS DON'T EVEN EXIST... ANYMORE.
NOBODY EVEN KNOWS HOW MANY DIED IN THE BATTLE...
STRETCH
...ONLY THAT MANY WIDOWS HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND.

BUT ONE THING ALL THE SOLDIERS MADE BEFORE THEY WENT OUT TO BATTLE...
...WAS A RECORDING OF THEIR OWN NAME.


AND SO THE SURVIVORS CHERISH THE RECORDINGS THAT THEY STILL HAVE.
SOME WAIT PATIENTLY FOR THEIR LOVED ONES TO RETURN...
SOME SIMPLY WAIT FOR THE END OF THE WAR TO BE ANNOUNCED.

THEY ALL ENJOY THE SONGS THAT WERE LEFT BEHIND AS MUCH AS THEY CAN...
...CALLING THE RUINS OF THIS TOWN MERRY WIDOW.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN WHO DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A SONG TO LEAVE BEHIND?!

THE ONES KILLED BY THE SWING OF EYGUE-BELLE'S BATON!
MASTER!

AMADEUS
AH...
NOW TAKE ME TO EYGUEBELLE! RIGHT AWAY!
ALL RIGHT, TIME FOR AN ABDUCTION!
HEY, I'M THE FIREARMS SPECIALIST HERE, ALIZE.
AH! HEY!
...ERR...GOOD POINT...

YEAH, ABDUCTION, ABDUCTION...
...good idea.
ABDUCTION!
ABDUCTION!
ABDUCTION.
TAP TAP
ABDUCTION.

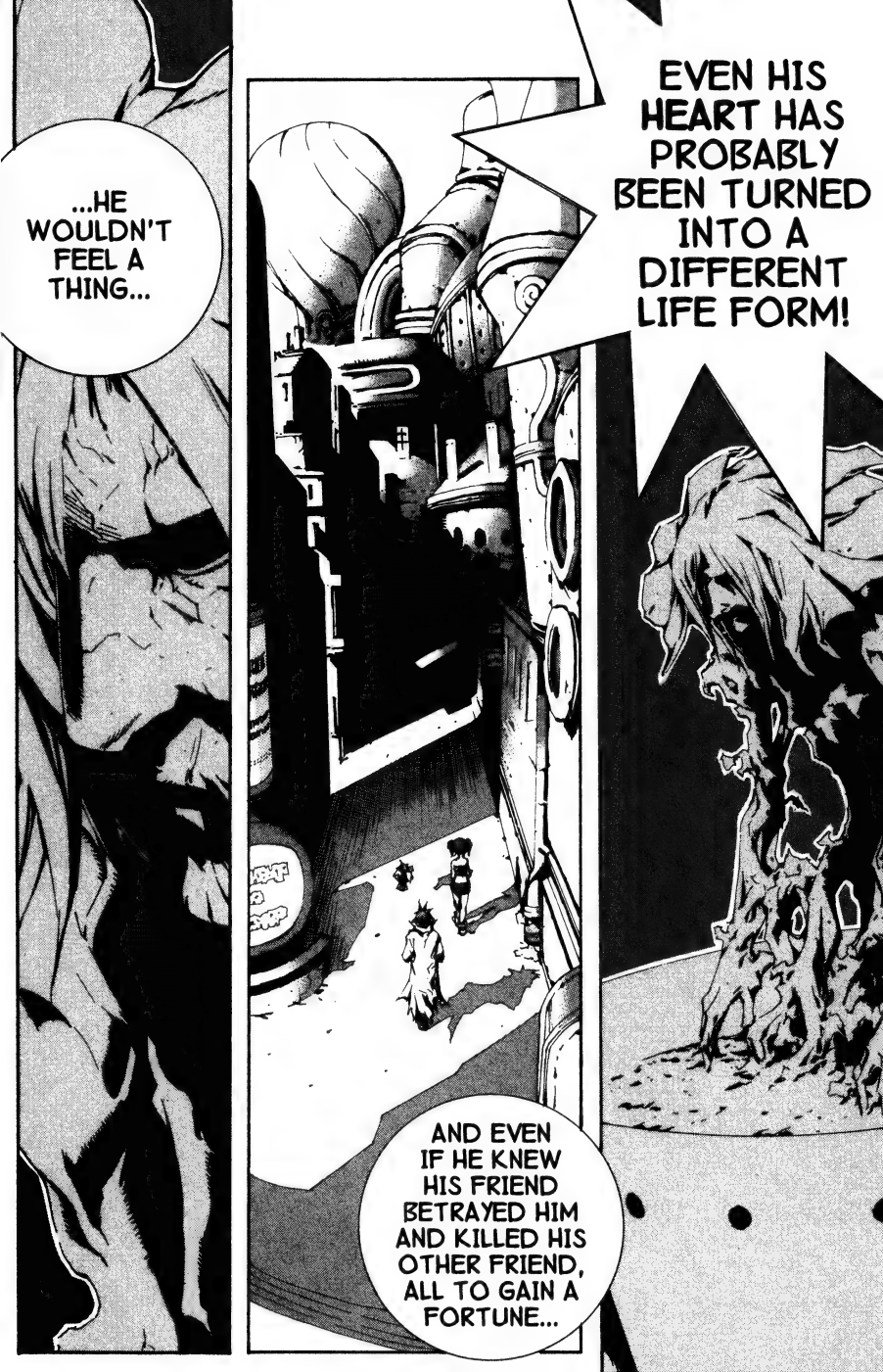
YEAH, ABDUCTION!!
?
.....
!!

H-HEY!
NOW, TIME FOR ME TO BIND YOU SO YOU CAN'T ESCAPE.

WINK
ピキュン
SLAM!
OH... UH... WELL...
THANK YOU.

Xip dbsft jg
tlz dbsft up gbm
jo uif tfb
joupyjdbuft nf
bt mpon bt zpvs jitt
Xip dbsft
Xip dbsft
SO, WE KIDNAPPED HIM FULL ORCHESTRA FANFARE STYLE...
...BUT NOW WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS LI'L TREE GEEZER...?

FLOWERS DON'T SPEAK, AND SPEAKERS DON'T FLOWER, EH?
I DON'T NEED NO BLADE TO KILL A PLANT--A DROP OF THIS SHOULD DO THE TRICK...
ACTUALLY...
...JUST DON'T WATER IT, AND EVENTUALLY...
Hee hee hee hee...
IT'S USELESS! THERE ISN'T REALLY ANYTHING WE CAN DO!

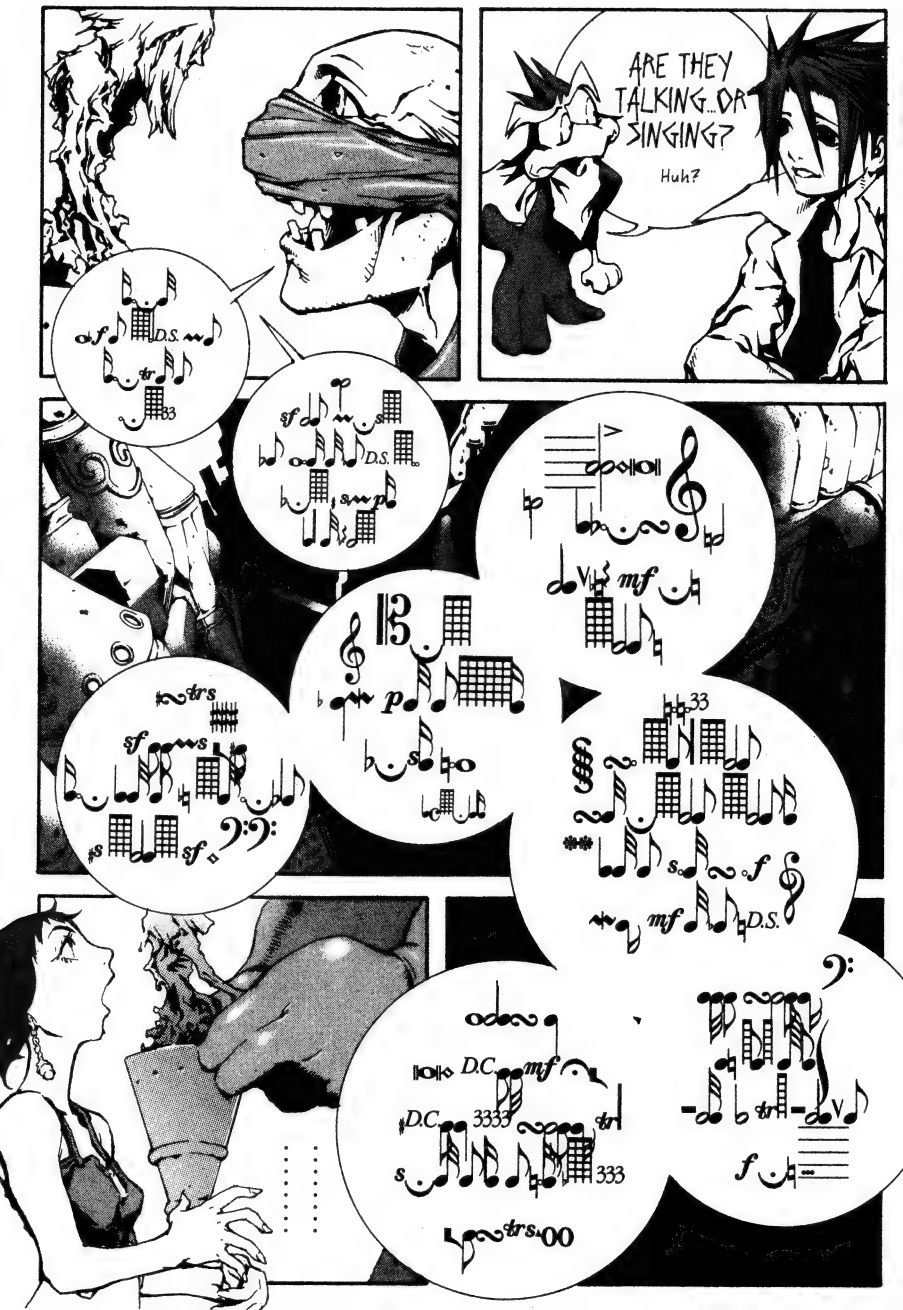

...HE WOULDN'T FEEL A THING...
EVEN HIS HEART HAS PROBABLY BEEN TURNED INTO A DIFFERENT LIFE FORM!
AND EVEN IF HE KNEW HIS FRIEND BETRAYED HIM AND KILLED HIS OTHER FRIEND, ALL TO GAIN A FORTUNE...

MASTER
BARDINET!!

SFF
WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, MASTER!

!!!
Hey... When did he...?

33
mp
H-HE SPOKE!!
Though I can't understand it...
sf
D.S.
D.S.


ARE THEY TALKING...OR SINGING?
Huh?

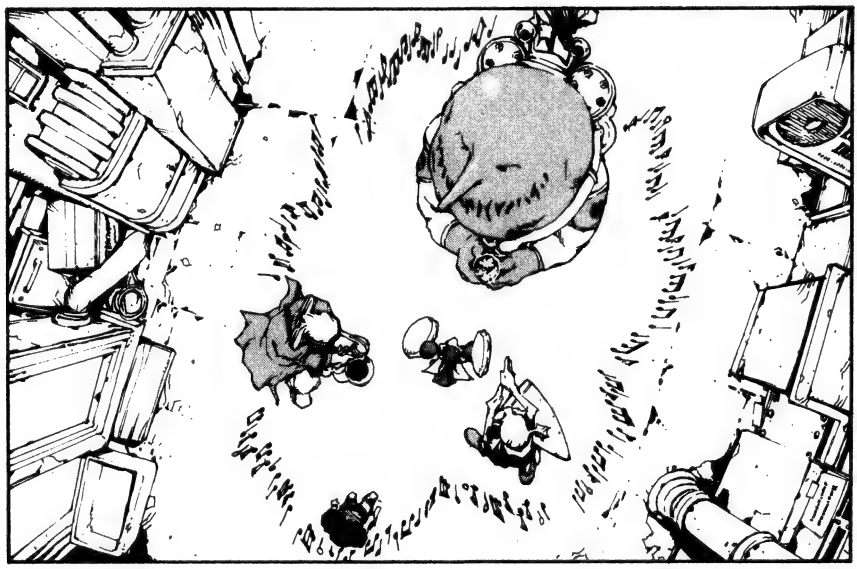
WH-WH-WH-WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
mf
os

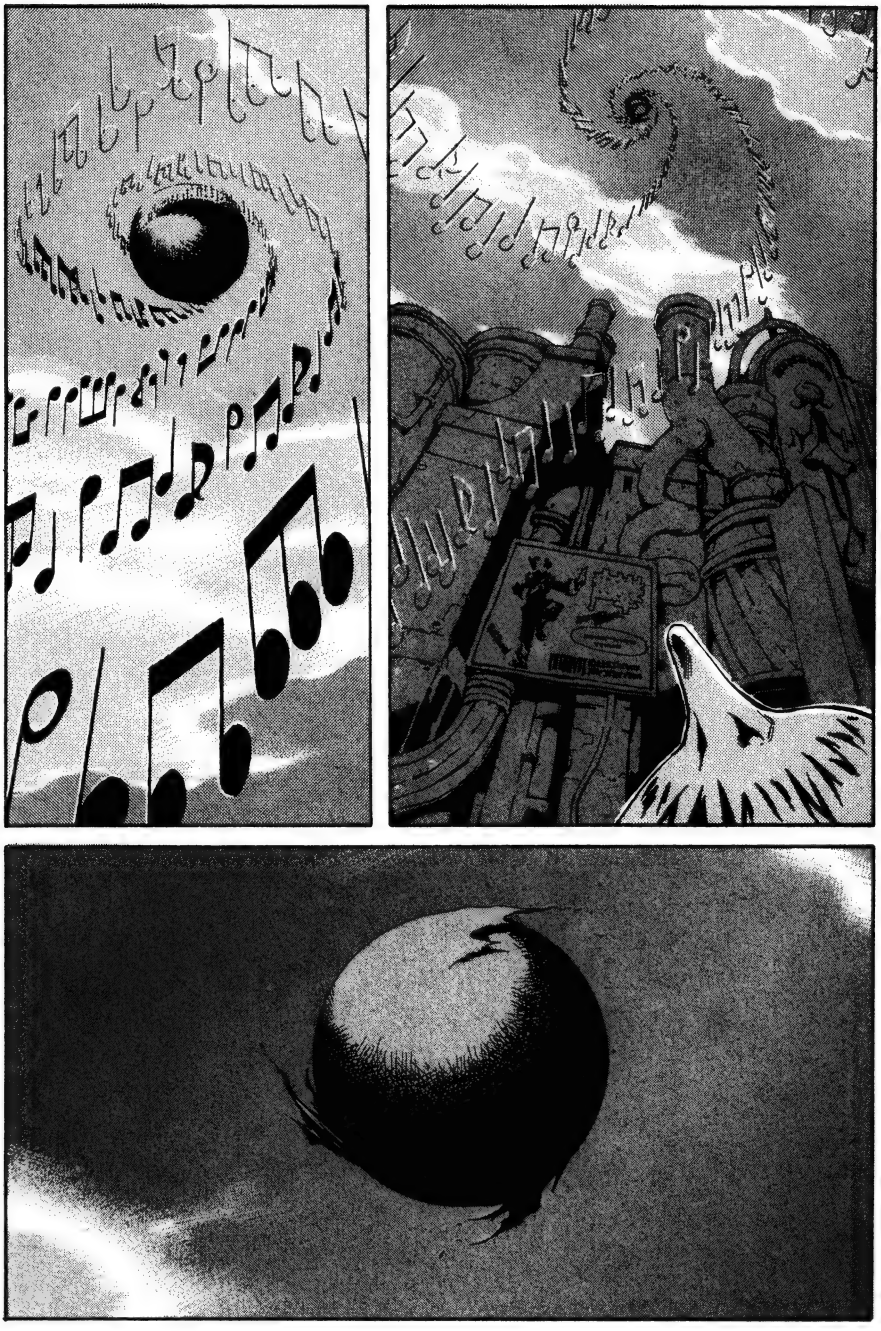
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THEY WANT TO STEAL HIM. LOOK...
POOF
STARTING A HUNDRED-METER DASH?
CLICK
222
MUHAHAHA!
D.S.
D.S.
D.C.
D.C.

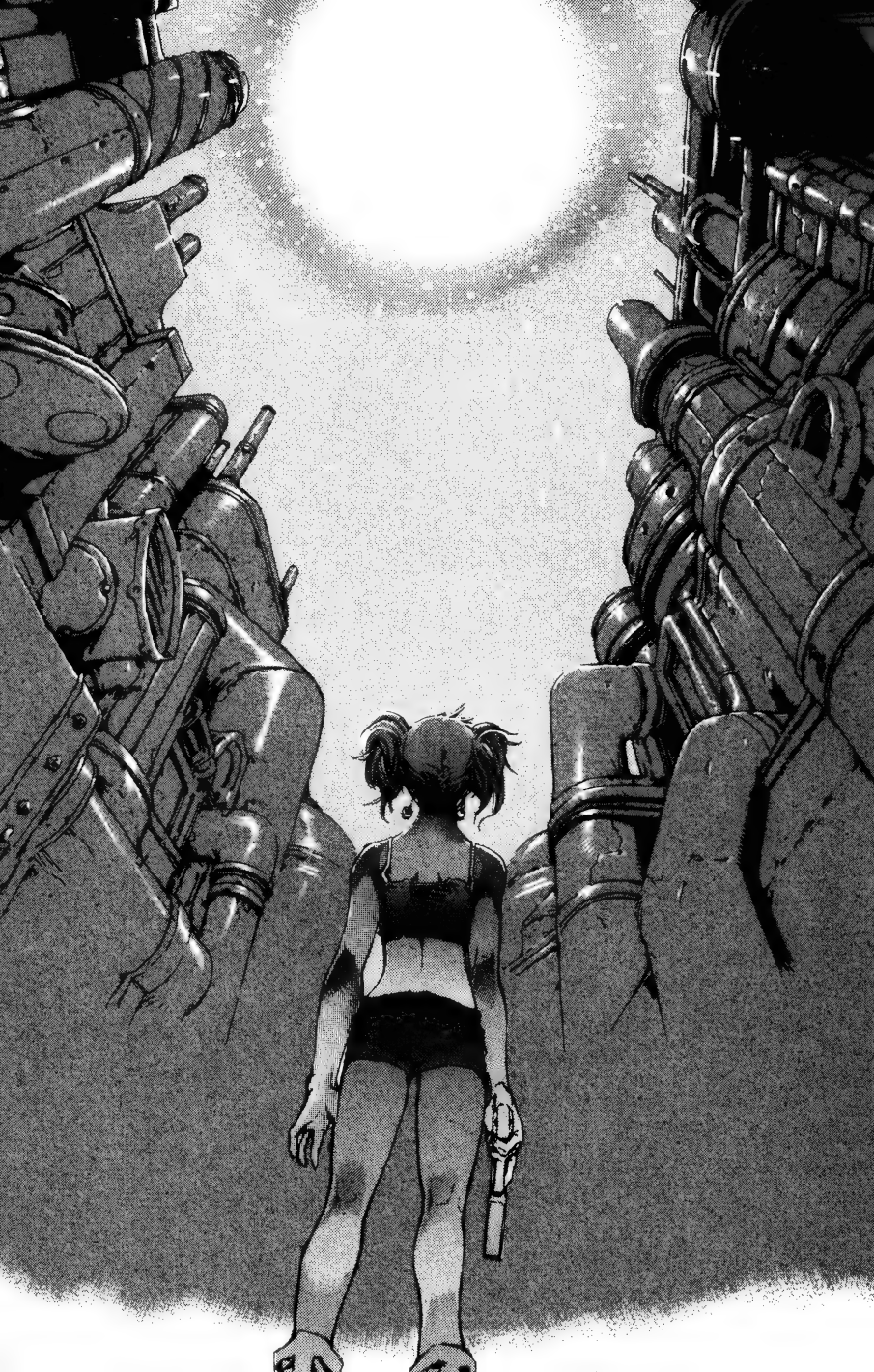
YEAH, LET'S START FROM THAT CHORD!
HEEY! THAT'S THE MASTER'S HI-FI GUN!

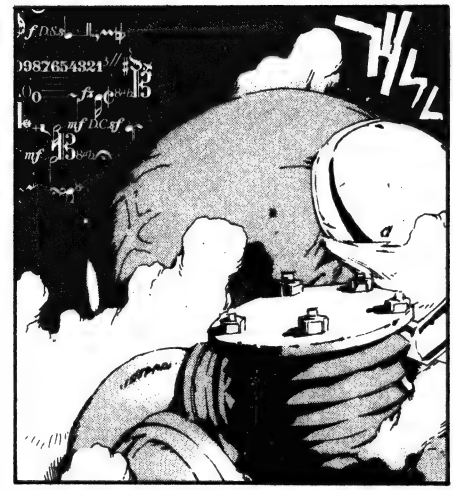
WH-
WHAT IS
THIS?
SAME OLD
MEMBERS,
SAME OLD
NUMBER, I
GUESS.
THEY'RE
TALKING, EVEN
THOUGH THEY
CAN'T TALK...

キコ
キコ
キコ









8vb D.S.

D.S.
9

BZZ
GNNT
DON'T MOVE !!!

CHAKING
BZZT
WAIT!
WAIT!!

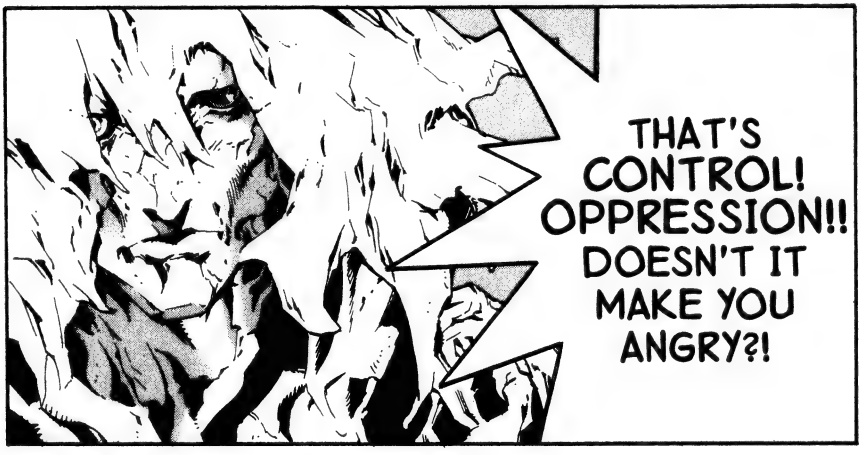
SHAK
SHAK
DANS UN SOMMEIL
QUE CARMENT TA IMAGE JE REVAIS LE BONHEUR AIDENT MENSAGE
TES YEUX ÉTAIENT
PLUS DOUX
TA VOIX PURE ET
SONORE
TU RAYONNAIS COMME UN CIEL ÉCLAIRÉ PAR

ALIZE!
WHERE'S
ALIZE?!
H-HEY!
ISN'T
THIS FAR
ENOUGH?!
OH, SO
THAT'S WHERE YOU
ARE, SONG PRINCESS.
I THOUGHT YOU
MIGHT HAVE BECOME
INVISIBLE, TOO.

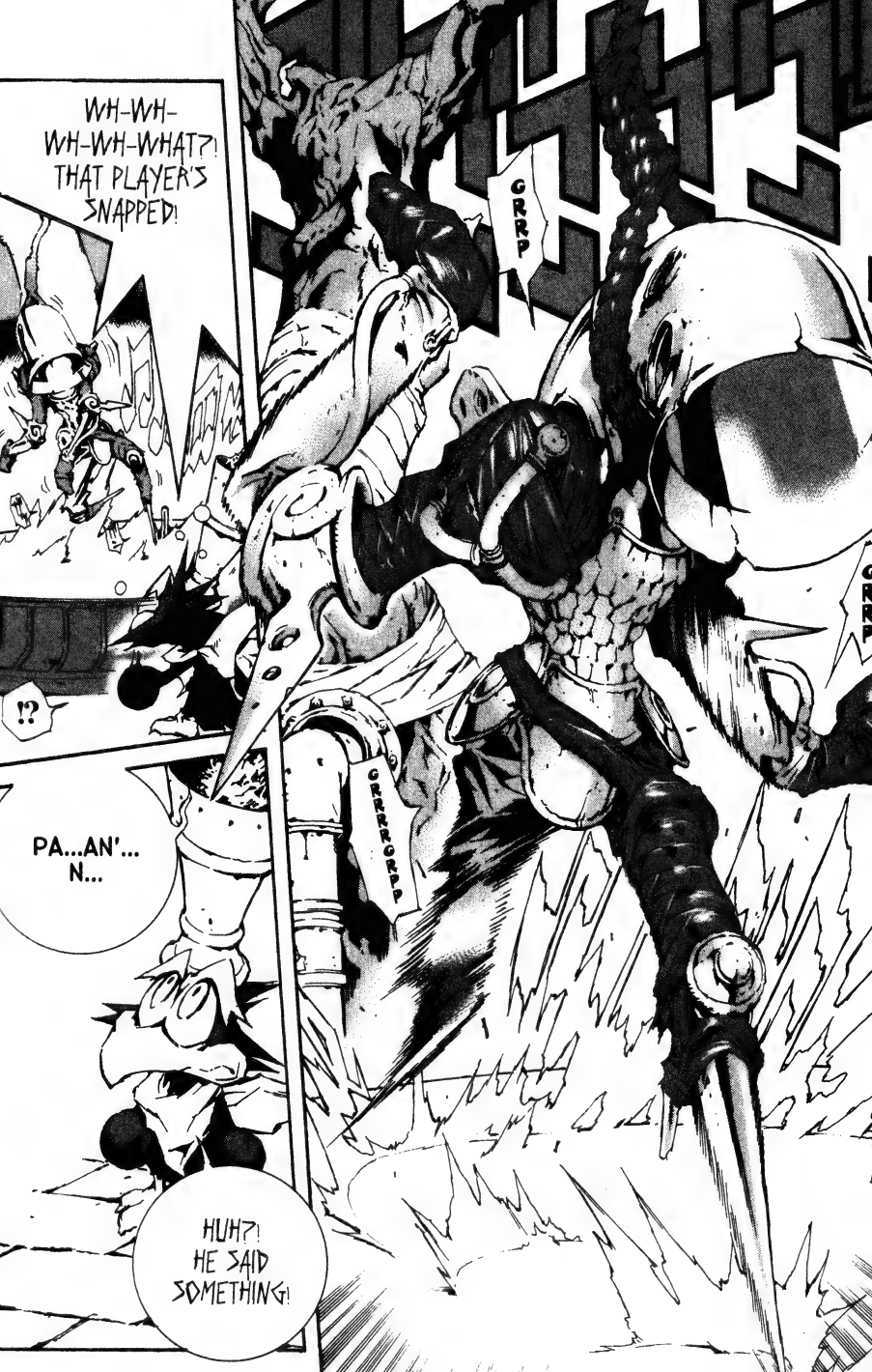
HUH...?
STUPID?
Mo...?

HOW CAN ANYONE CALL THIS PLACE PEACEFUL?

...HOW STUPID...


THAT'S CONTROL! OPPRESSION!! DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU ANGRY?!

A MAESTRO WHO LOCKS UP ALL THE SONGS IN A SAFE AND PLAYS UP AN INVISIBLE PEACE...
...THAT'S WHAT EYGUEBELLE IS! A CONDUCTOR OF LIES!
TURNING YOUR PROUD MUSICAL SCORE INTO AN ABACUS, TRADING MUSICAL NOTES FOR BANKNOTES.
SKRCH
SKRT
SKRRRIP
!!!


WH-WH-WH-WH-WHAT?! THAT PLAYER'S SNAPPED!
!?
PA...AN'... N...
HUH?! HE SAID SOMETHING!
GRRRRGRRP
GRRP
GRRR

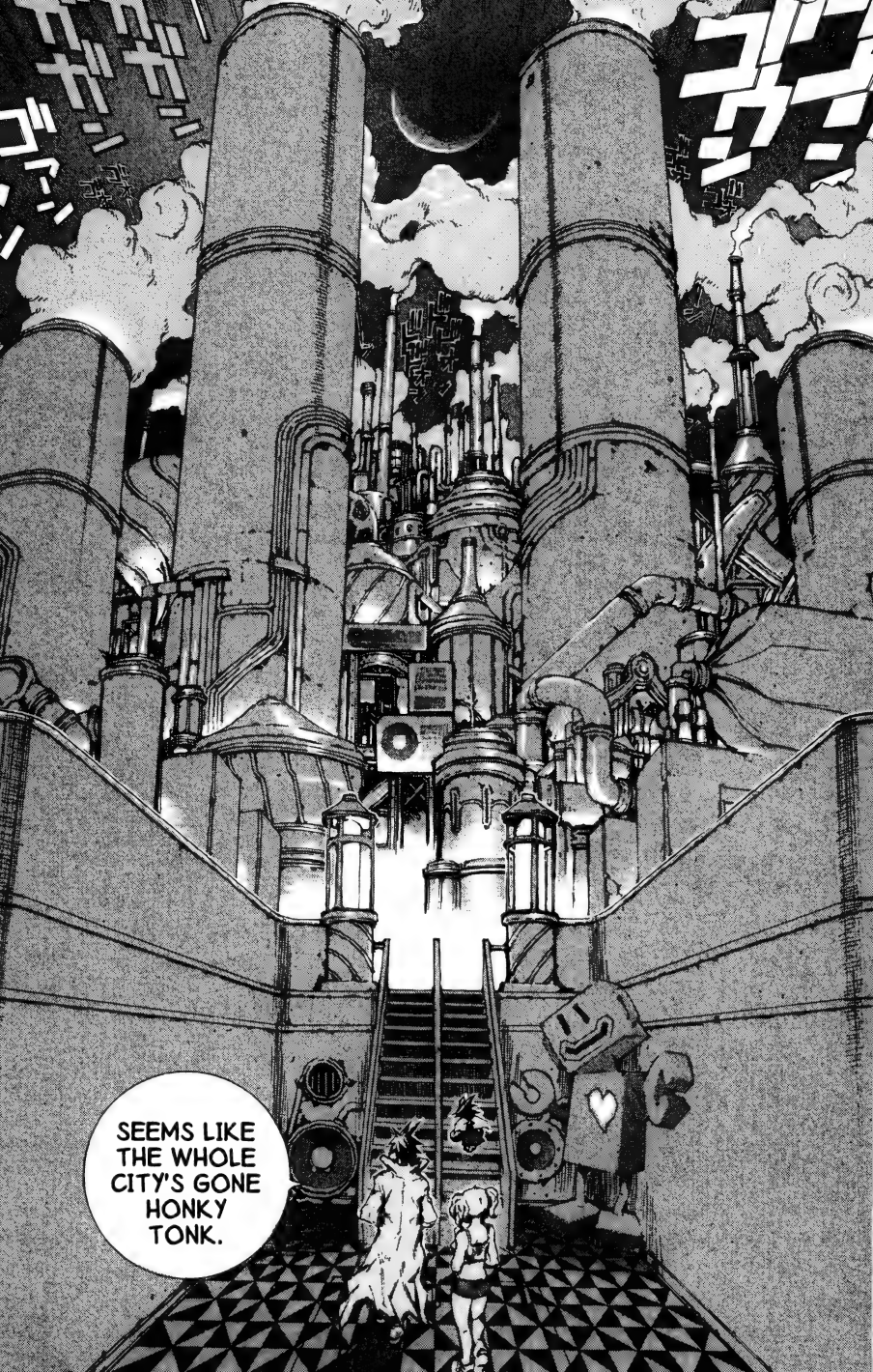
PA...PER...AN'...
P-P...PEN!
HERE YOU GO.
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THAT IT'S STOLEN.
IS A MUSICAL SCORE OKAY?

WANT SEE TRUTH?
I DO.
DO YOU WANT TO...
.....
...SEE THE TRUTH...?
SHOW IT TO ME!!

ONE OF HIS CHILDREN...
SHAKE
SHAKE
SO, THERE WAS A SURVIVOR FROM PASSION FLOWER?
AND THEY EVEN TOOK BARDINET? WHAT CAN THEY BE AFTER? WELL, THAT DOESN'T MATTER...
AT THIS RATE...
-3-
SKSH

A WIDOW HIDING THE PAIN IN HER HEART...
...EVERYONE IN THE CITY WILL BECOME LIKE HIM!
3
...BEGINS SINGING THE "RHAPSODY IN BLUE"!!
I HAVE TO FINISH IT...

FINISH EVERY-THING!!


SEEMS LIKE THE WHOLE CITY'S GONE HONKY TONK.

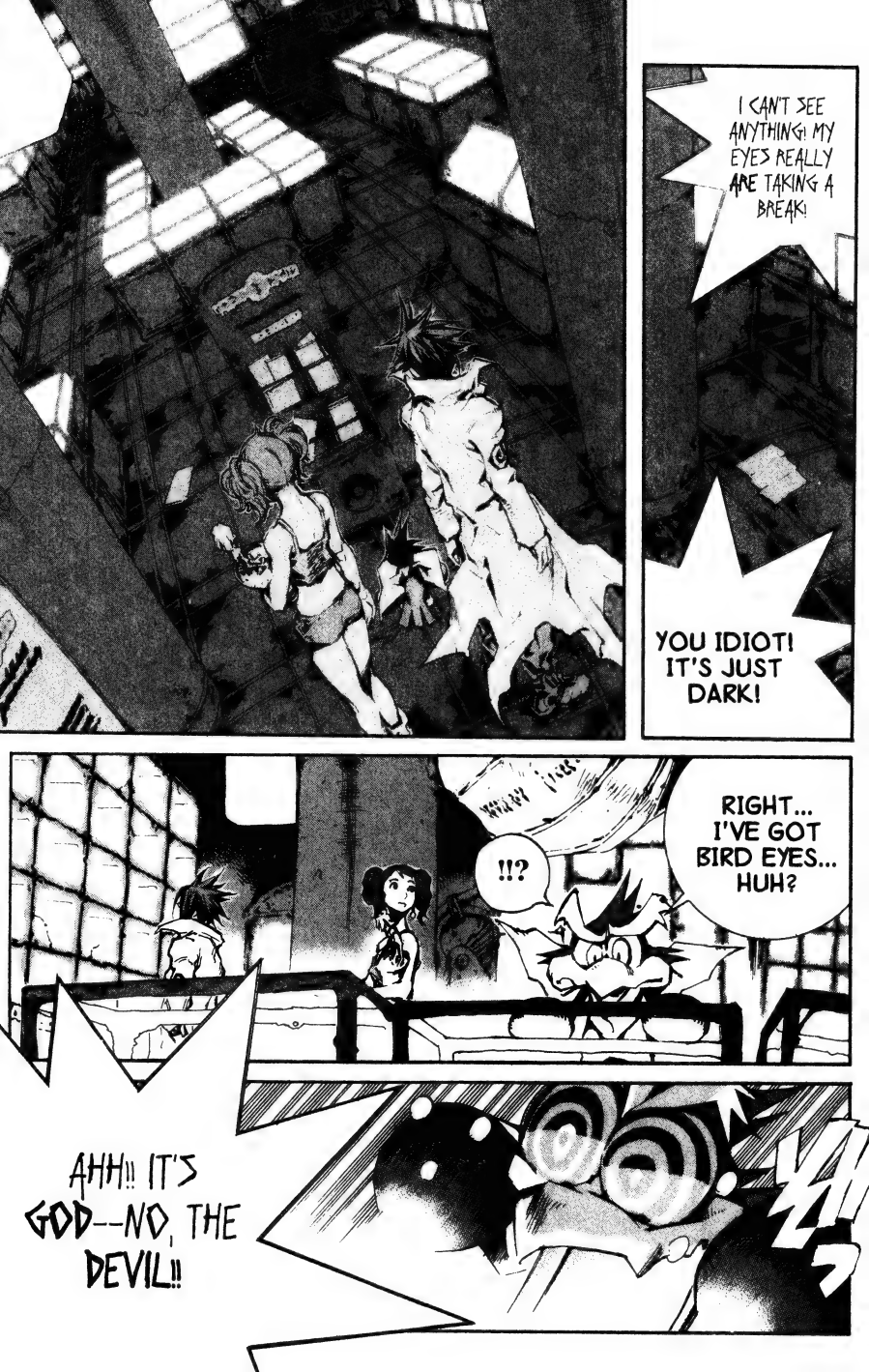
...AS IF A WIDOW IS SINGING A SONG POORLY.
MELODY OF MALADY...?

IT'S ESPECIALLY BAD HERE...

OH, I GET IT NOW! SO THAT'S WHY YOU CAN'T SEE THE INVISIBLE!

OUR EARS ARE SO BUSY, WE MIGHT NOT HAVE TIME TO USE OUR EYES.

STOP MESSING AROUND!
PON
PON
WAH
...THIS NOISE WOULD DROWN OUT ANY SCREAMS.
33
THERE'S NO GUARANTEE...
WHOA!
...THAT THIS MASTER ISN'T IN CAHOOTS WITH EYGUEBELLE.
EVEN IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN HERE...


I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING! MY EYES REALLY ARE TAKING A BREAK!
YOU IDIOT! IT'S JUST DARK!
RIGHT... I'VE GOT BIRD EYES... HUH?
!!?
AHH!! IT'S GOD--NO, THE DEVIL!!

LOOK!!
LOOK!!
NO IT'S NOT!!
TH-THIS IS A VIOLIN!
THERE'S A LOT MORE. TAKE A LOOK.
WHAT'S THIS?!

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY MACHINES LIKE THIS BUNCH BEFORE.
WHAT...IN THE WORLD...?
WHAT ARE THESE USED FOR...?
THEY LOOK LIKE... TOOLS OF WAR.

IN OTHER WORDS, WEAPONS.
RIGHT, MR. BARDINET?
Melody of Malady - END

At the miserable end of that war
All the verbs became bullets
All the nouns became explosives
And the crisp interjections
Became sharp sounds that resounded all over.

The conversations in the trenches
Soon became codes nobody could understand.
Emotions dispersed...and
We transformed into **them.**

All of those who were there
Could only worry about protecting themselves.
Punctuation was out of the question...
Nothing to do but keep spinning your tongue.

Soon the atmosphere changed shape
Arms and legs and backs and stomachs returned to simply being **it.**
But many mouths in a few days
Continued working everywhere.

The War of Grammar was ended with this battle.

And so the ceasefire
Was settled in total silence
In this ceremony where nobody
Said a word.

People would soon call it
The Wordless Signature.

(From part 15 of *After the War of Words*)

WEAPONS...?
IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE TO SAY OUTDATED...
...ANTIQUE WEAPONS.
EVEN IF THE WAR IS PAST, AND IT'S BEEN PAINTED OVER WITH PEACE OR TRAGEDY...
TAP

MY...
...WAR IS...
...MY WAR ISN'T OVER!!
PLINK
?
!

YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THE WAR NOT BEING OVER...

BLAM
BLAM

HUH?
AAHH!

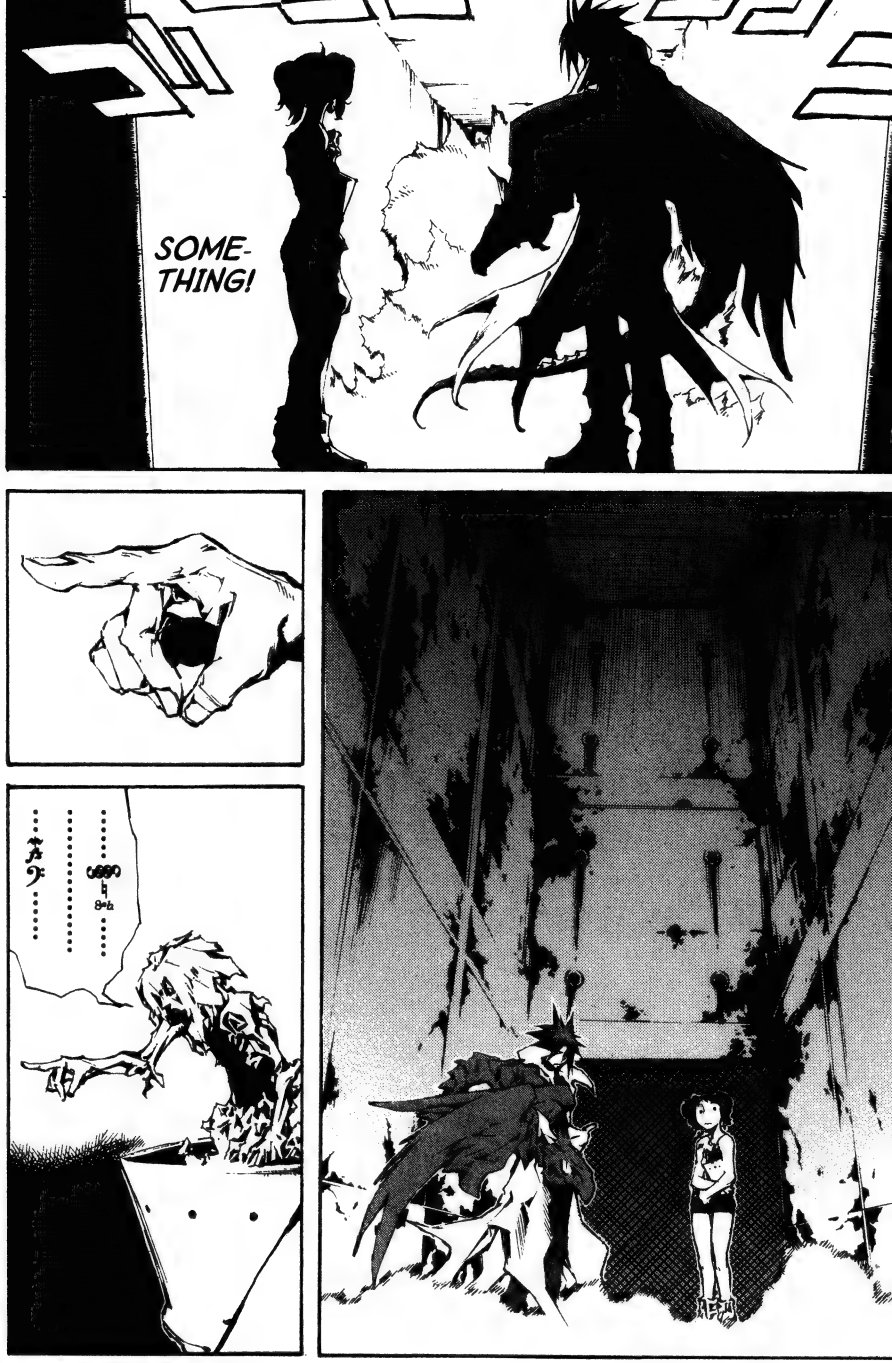
HEY, ALIZE-- WATCH OUT!
BLAM
BLAM

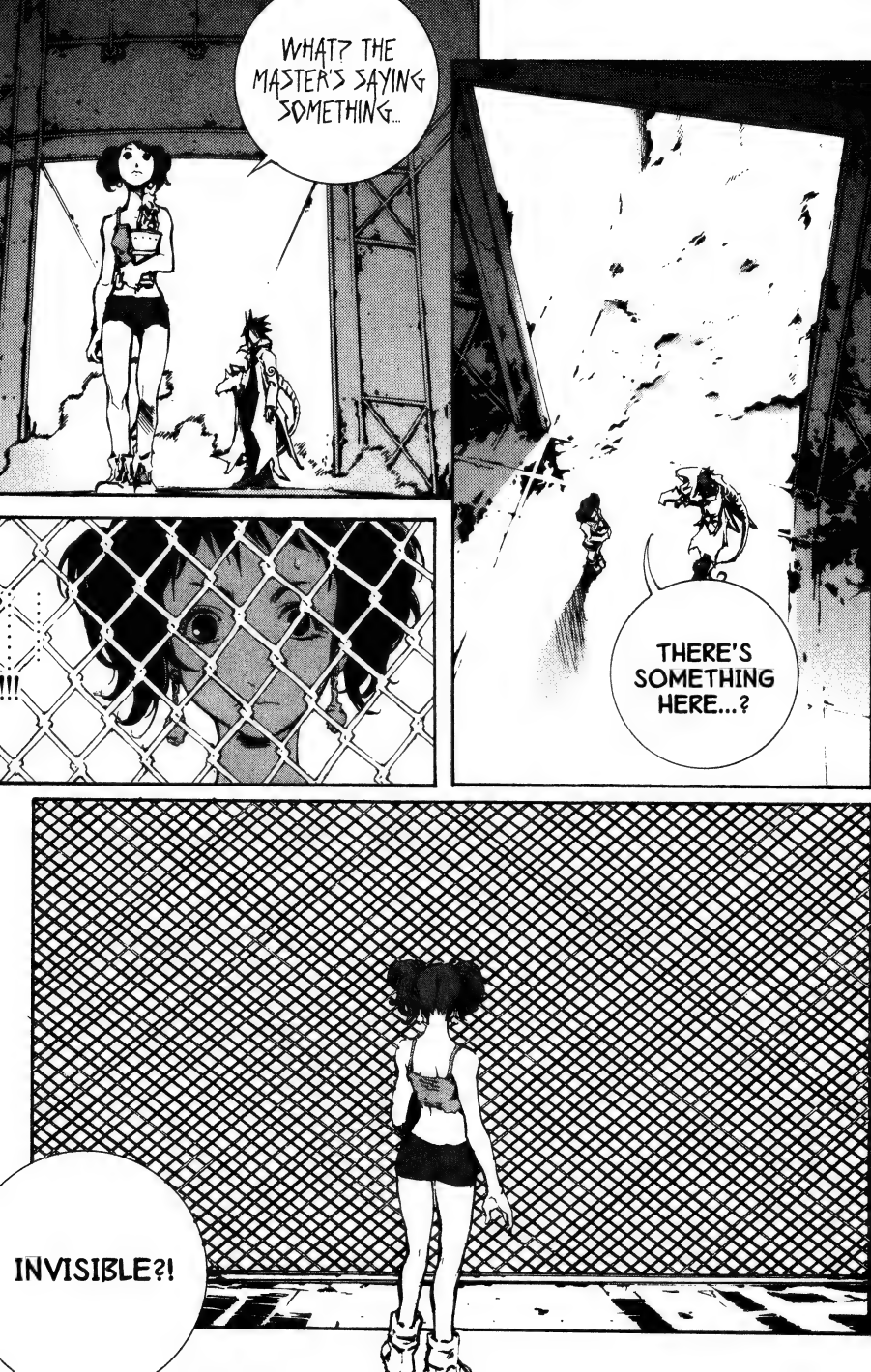
ALIZE, TAKE MY HAND!
GRAB

HAND HAND
HAND HAND HAND
HAND HAND
HAND HAND
HAND!!
オオオ
HAND?!

LOOKS LIKE HE'S NOT HOSTILE! SEE? THE PEACE SIGN!
THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKING AROUND!
THAT'S ANYTHING BUT A PEACEFUL SYMBOL!!

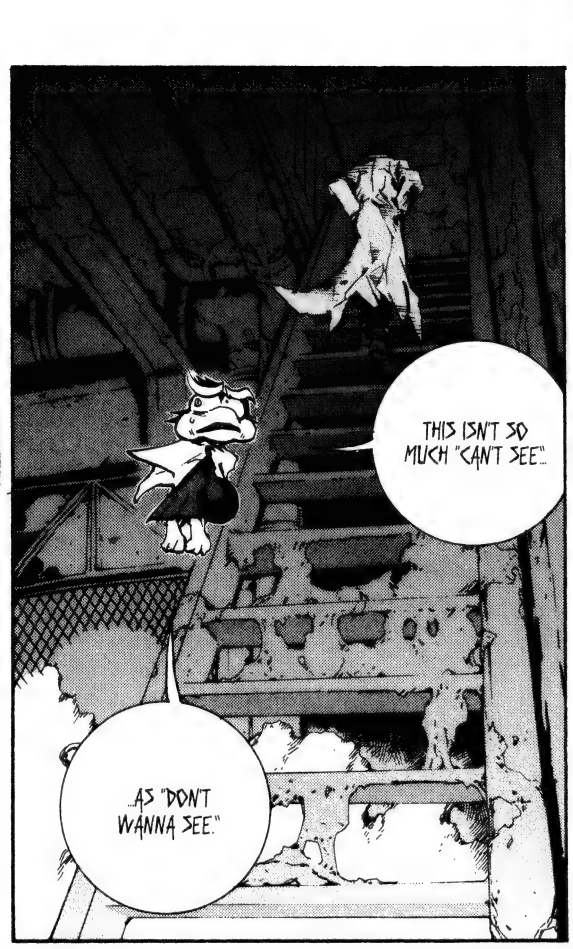
CRUNCH
ALIZE IS RIGHT.
.....!!
EVERYTHING'S BEEN PAINTED OVER WITH PEACE...
...BUT SOMETHING ISN'T FINISHED!


SOME-
THING!
……
……
……


WHAT? THE MASTER'S SAYING SOMETHING...
THERE'S SOMETHING HERE...?
!!!
INVISIBLE?!

THE INVISIBLE IS THIS CITY'S FOUNDATION!
NOBODY HERE DOESN'T GAIN SOMETHING FROM THE BLESSED PHONEMES RELEASED FROM THE INVISIBLE!
BECAUSE EVERY INSTRUMENT CREATED IN MERRY WIDOW...
...STARTS WITH THAT FOUNDATION!

THAT'S WHY THE GHOSTS OF THE PAST WHO POLLUTE THIS CITY'S FUTURE...
BUT NOW, A FUTURE MORE MISERABLE THAN THE PAST IS ON ITS WAY TO THIS CITY!
...MUST BE DESTROYED AND REMOVED!
THEY MUST BE SILENCED FOREVER!


THIS ISN'T SO MUCH "CAN'T SEE"...
...AS "DON'T WANNA SEE."

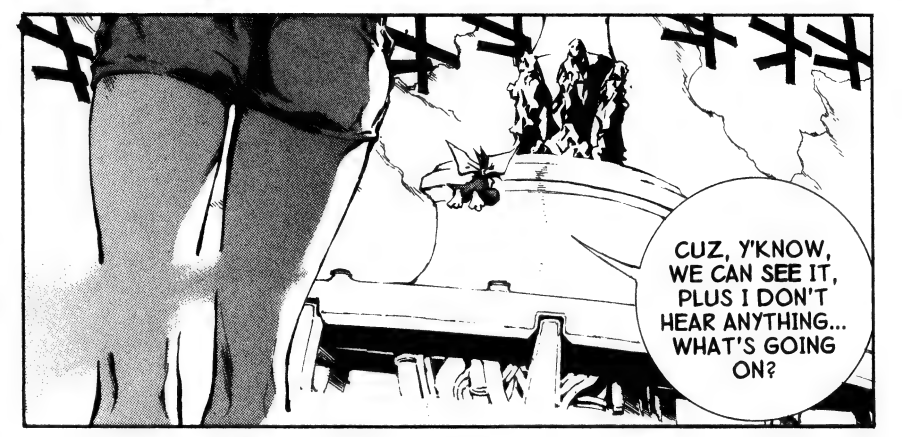
I-IT'S JUST LIKE...JUST LIKE THAT TIME...

JUST LIKE WHEN GRAMPS WAS...
OR WILL WE BE UNABLE TO TAKE A LOOK?
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
NOW, SHALL WE...
...TAKE A LOOK AT THIS SO-CALLED TRUTH?

!
CREEEAK

ALIZE! HOLD ON!
HAA!
SO...
HANG ON, ALIZE!!
WHICH SHOULD WE TAKE CARE OF FIRST?

IS THIS INVISIBLE?


CUZ, Y'KNOW, WE CAN SEE IT, PLUS I DON'T HEAR ANYTHING... WHAT'S GOING ON?

I'LL TELL YOU THE TRUE NAME OF THIS INSTRUMENT.
THAT'S BECAUSE THIS INSTRUMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN VISIBLE, AND I CAN'T HAVE YOU PLAYING IT...
THE ULTIMATE WEAPON CREATED TO END THE WAR OF GRAMMAR ONCE AND FOR ALL...
THE REVERBERATING WEAPON WITH THE POWER TO KILL EVEN THE ALL-POWERFUL GOD--

INVIN-
CIBLE!
SO INVINCIBLE CAME TO BE CALLED INVISIBLE, EH?
THE SHINING PRISM OF PEACE CHANGED THE IDENTITY OF THIS INSTRUMENT OVER TIME...

WHY DID YOU BRING THAT GIRL HERE, BARDINET?!
YOU WANT THIS CITY TO THROW AWAY ITS HARD-EARNED PEACE AND DESTROY ITSELF?!
CHAK!
YOU WERE ONE OF THE CREATORS... YOU OF ALL PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THIS!
THAT HIS CHILDREN...

THAT GIRL IS ONE OF THEM--

THE ONLY ONE REMAINING.

THE PASSION FLOWERS WERE CREATED TO ACT AS ITS HEART.

...IS THE WEAPON OF SONG!!

...THE MOST POWERFUL...

...COULD BECOME THE FINAL TRIGGER TO THE INVINCIBLE!

MUTTER...

SPEAK...

WHISPER...

RECITE...

SCREAM...

AMONG ALL THE LANGUAGE WEAPONS...

IF THE INVINCIBLE ITSELF IS DESTROYED, THEN THE PHONEMES EMANATING FROM IT WILL CEASE...
SHE IS THE SOLOIST WHO CAN SING THE B.G.M. THAT WILL PLAY DURING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD.
...AND THIS CITY THAT RELIES ON THEM WILL BE RUINED!

DESTROYED? AFTER SURVIVING THE WAR, WE'D STILL BE DESTROYED?
TAP
TAP
TAP
WE...HAD NO OTHER CHOICE.
THE WAR WAS OVER!! BUT IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE IT WAS TRULY OVER...
...WE JUST NEEDED ONE MORE TINY WAR!

GO TO YOUR ETERNAL REST!! IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR PEACEFUL REST!

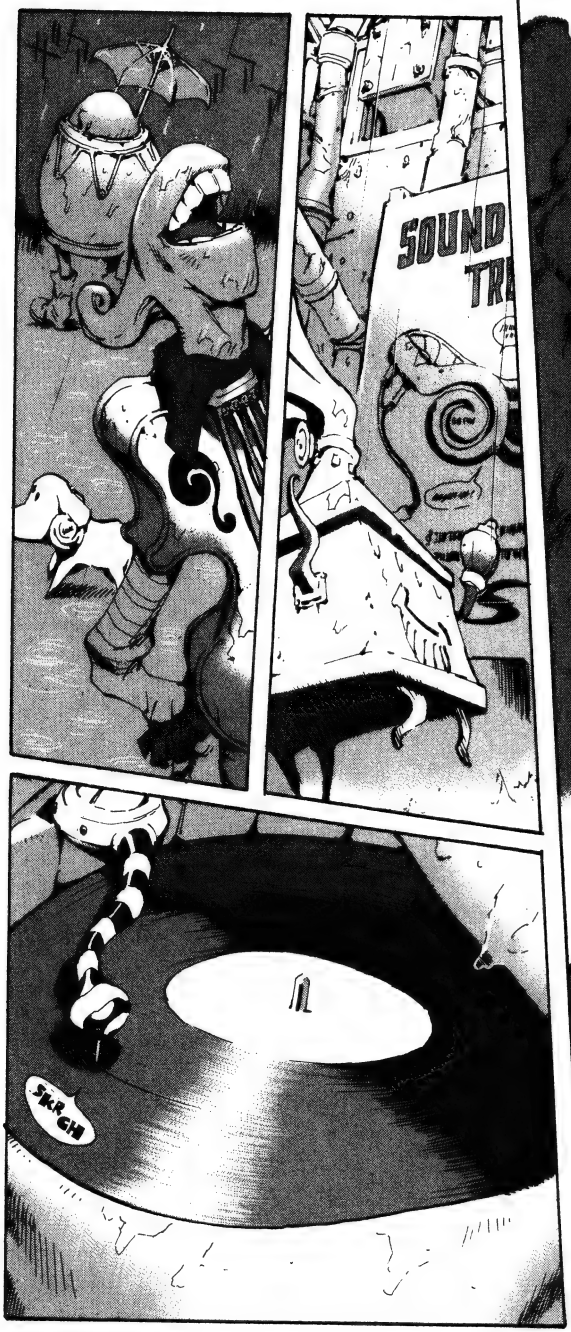
!?

DNN

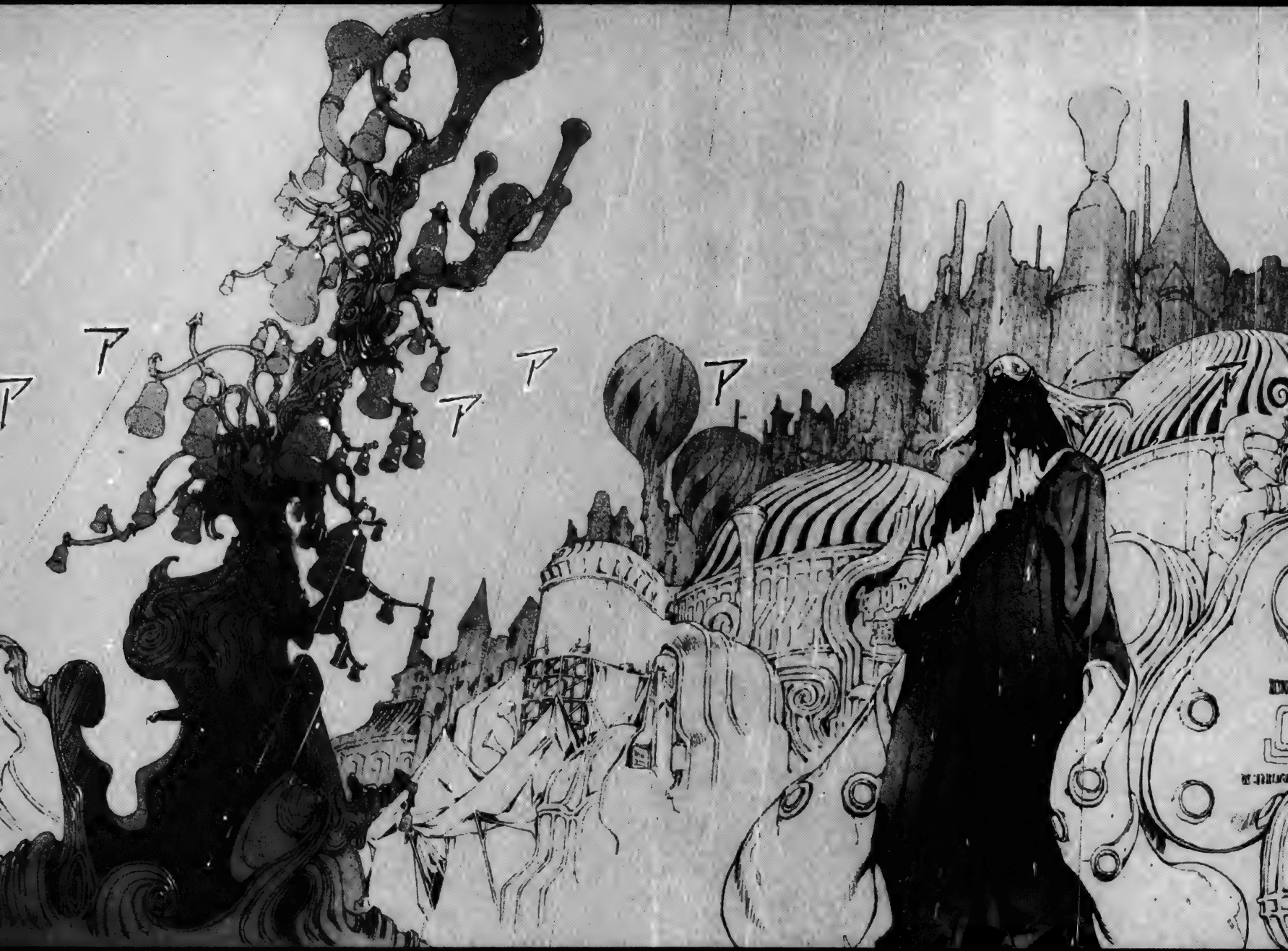
D.C.
ALIIIZE!!
fz
tr mf
D.C.
p mp
...!?

ズドン
ズドン
ズドン
ズドン
ズドン
ヴヴヴ

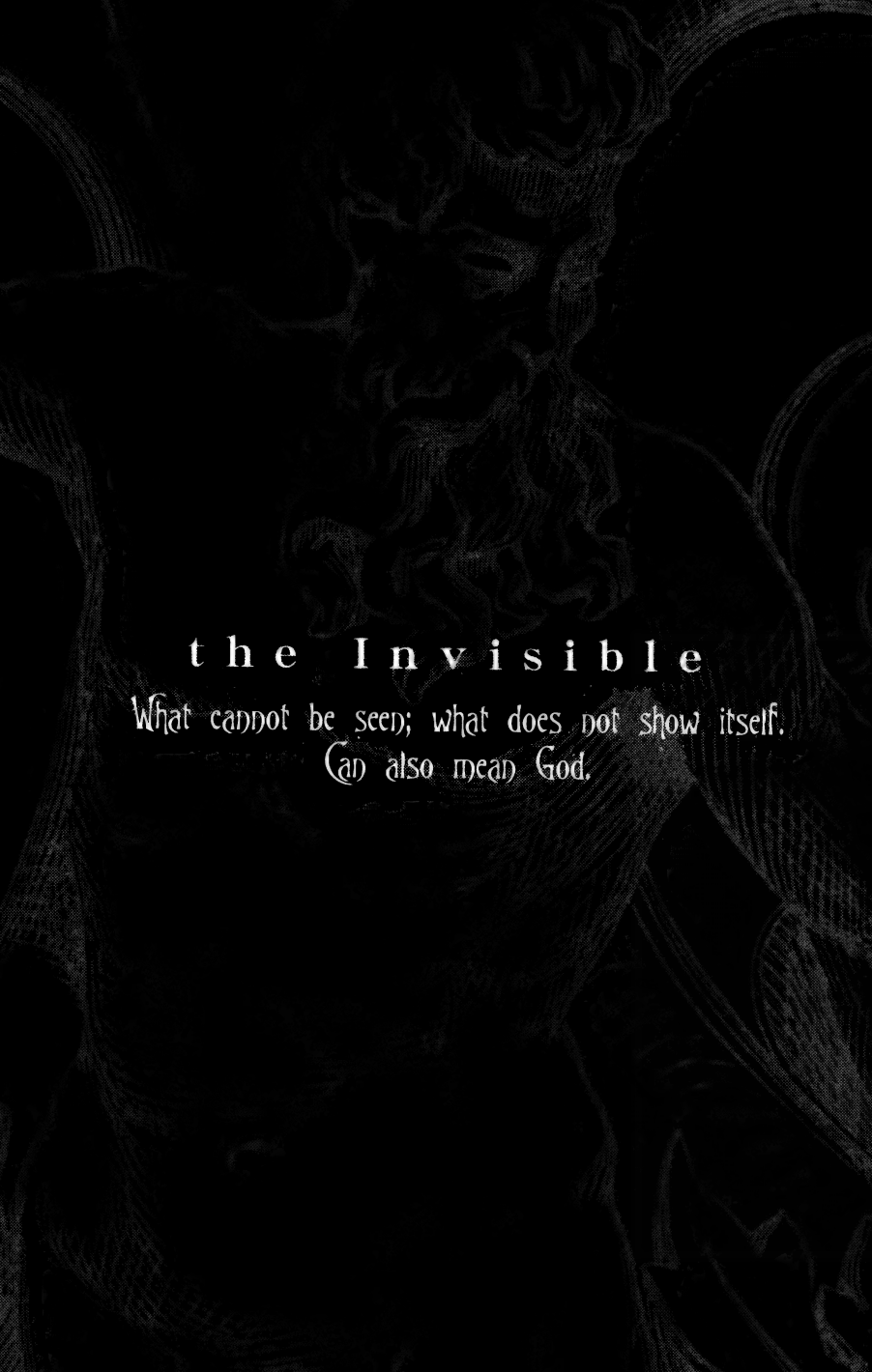
ST...OP...
HER...
ST--
IF...YOU...
DON'T...
MERRY...
WIDOW...
WILL...
...BE
DESTROYED!!!


WHILE HUMMING THE RHAPSODY IN BLUE!!
POOF
SOUND
SKRCH

ゴゴゴゴゴ



Rhapsody in Blue - END



the Invisible

What cannot be seen; what does not show itself.
Can also mean God.

the Invincible

What cannot be conquered;
An indestructible existence.

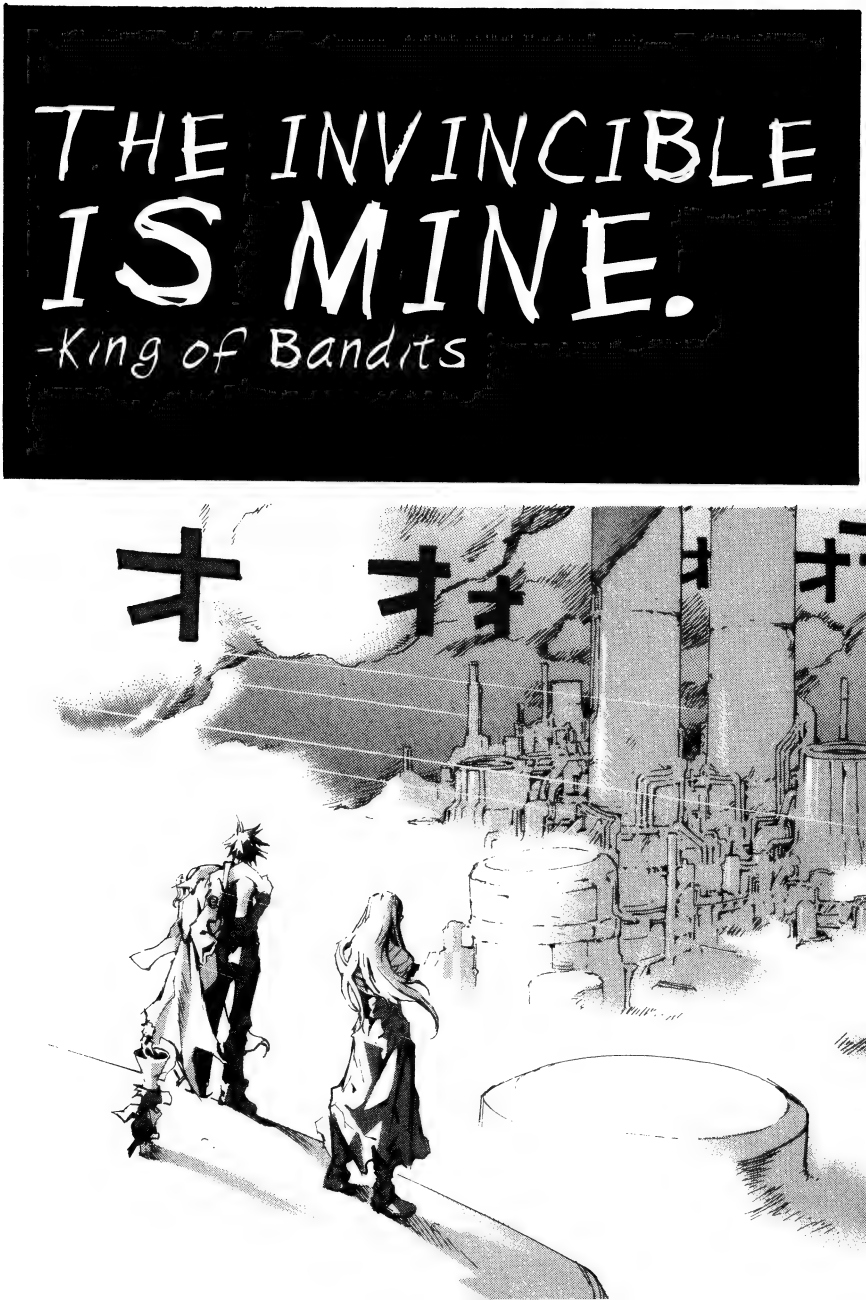
STOP HER!!
STOOOOOP
HER!!
GRAB
ALIIIZE!
SFF

SORRY, BUT COULD YOU LISTEN TO THIS DEVILISH SONG AS WELL?
YOU'RE PROBABLY HEARING THE ULTIMATE ANGELIC LULLABY RIGHT NOW...
...BUT IT'S SO WELL MADE THAT IT'S GOING TO TAKE EVERYONE TO HEAVEN.
IT MAKES THINGS COMPLICATED, BUT...IN THIS WORLD...

...WE NEED A LITTLE BIT OF BOTH ANGEL AND DEVIL!
GAOOOOM
GAGA
GAGA
GAGA

SKSH
THAT'S WHY THERE'S GUYS LIKE ME WHO'RE IN A SINFUL LINE OF WORK...

KING...OF BANDITS...?!
IT WAS A LOT OF WORK LEARNING THAT LANGUAGE.
THE INVINCIBLE


THE INVINCIBLE
IS MINE.
-King of Bandits

SOMETIMES, RATHER THAN LIVING SURROUNDED BY CRAZY ANGELS...
WHAT ARE THE WIDOWS SUPPOSED TO DO WITHOUT THAT MELODY?!
WITHOUT THE MELODY THAT PROVIDED FOR THEM...
...IT'S BETTER TO LIVE WITH DEVILS YOU CAN TALK TO.
ANYWAY, THAT SONG IS TOO MUCH FOR HUMANS TO HEAR OR USE.

IT'S GOING TO GO ON TOUR.
AN ENDLESS TOUR.

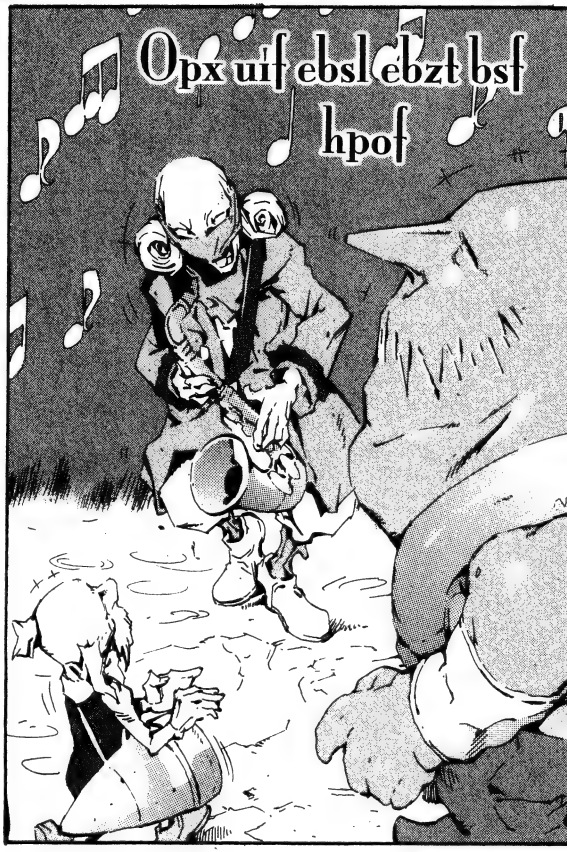
LONG ENOUGH FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO ASK FOR AN ENCORE!
BUT THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY WILL BE FINE.
THEY ARE MERRY WIDOWS, AFTER ALL!
BUT...
AS LONG AS INVINCIBLE IS HERE... SOMEDAY, SOMEONE WILL...

LISTEN, THE INVINCIBLE HAS BEEN STOLEN BY THE KING OF BANDITS!
YEAH! ONCE IT'S BEEN STOLEN, IT NEVER COMES BACK!
OHHH NOOO!! IT'S BEEN STOLEN BY THE KING OF BANDITS! TOTAL DESPAIR!!

HEY, WHAT GIVES?!
WHA?
AAH!
YOU...
...CRIMINAL.

tvooz zftufsebz
nz mjgf xbt gimmfe
xjui sbjo

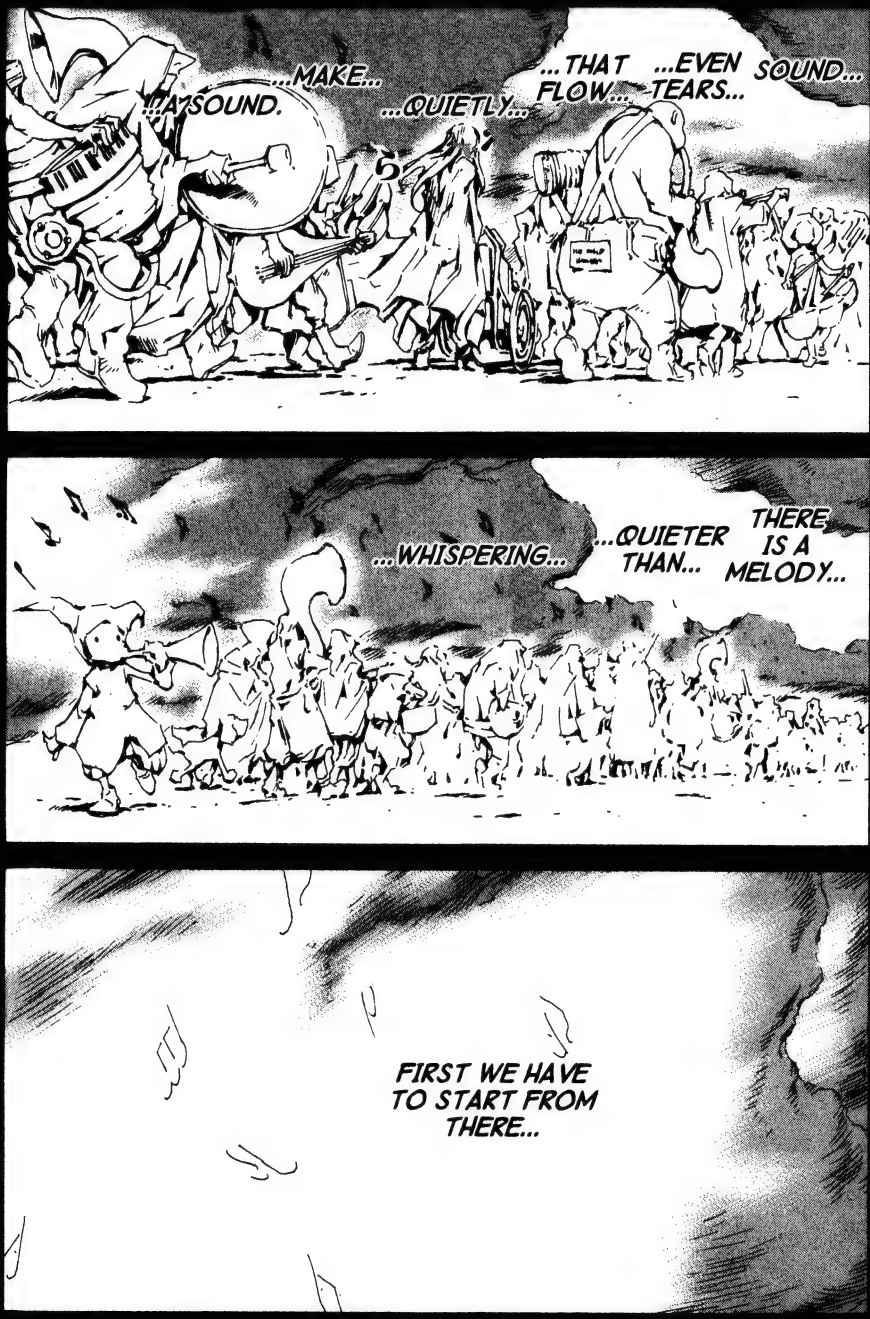
tvooz zpv tnjmfe bu nf
boe ujfo ju fbtfe nz qbjo

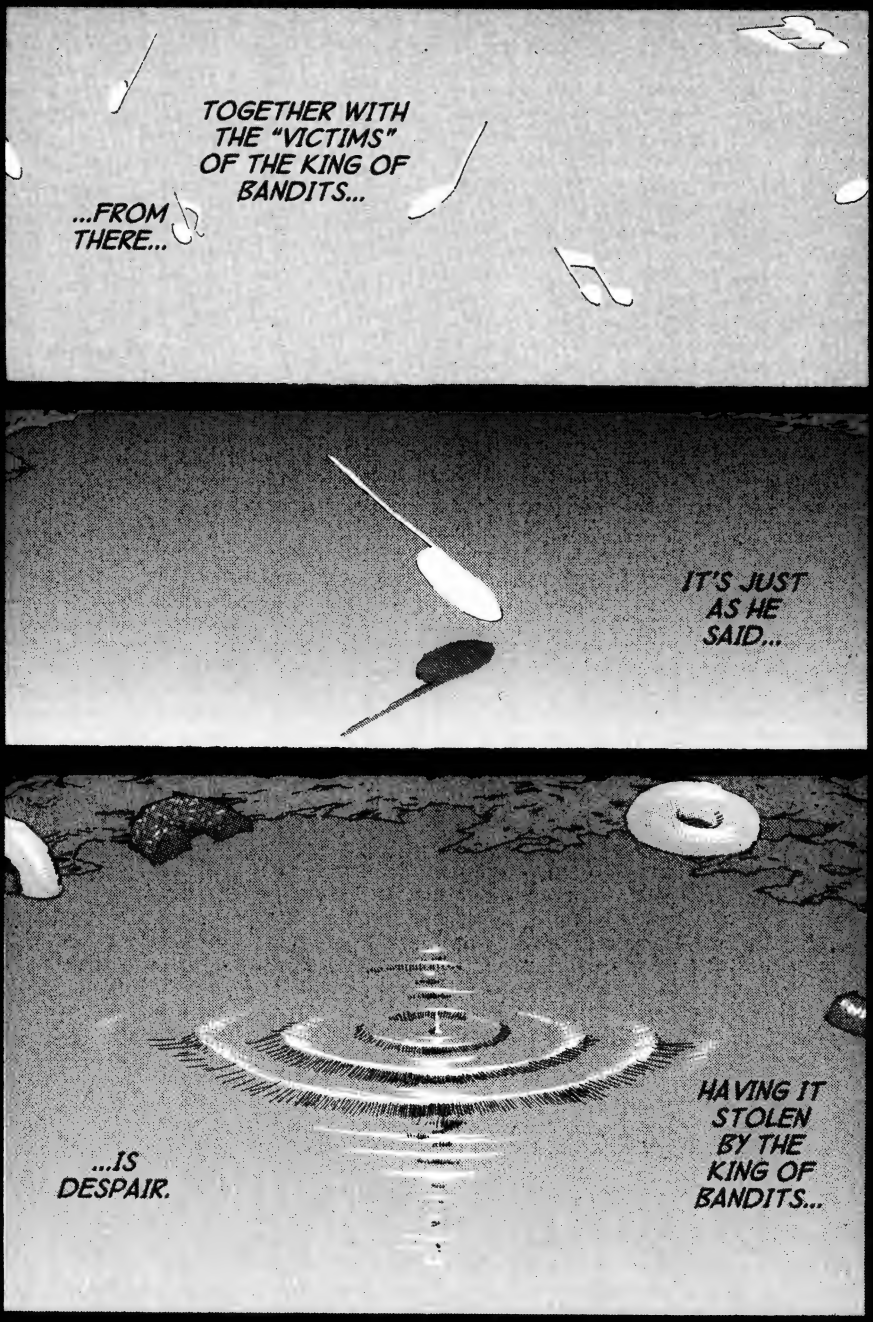


Tvooz pof!tp
usvf
Jmpwf!zpv....

WITH THAT GRIN ON HIS FACE...
...HE LEFT, TAKING MY ARM WITH HIM.
HE'S RIGHT-- YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL WHEN SHAKING HANDS WITH A CRAZY ANGEL.
BUT EVEN WITHOUT LEADING THE CHOIR FROM THE STAND...

...YOU CAN STILL LISTEN AND PLAY MUSIC TOGETHER, OF COURSE...
I JUST NEED TO TAKE A CUE FROM A DEVIL...
...AND USE MY...
...SHARP, POINTY EARS...

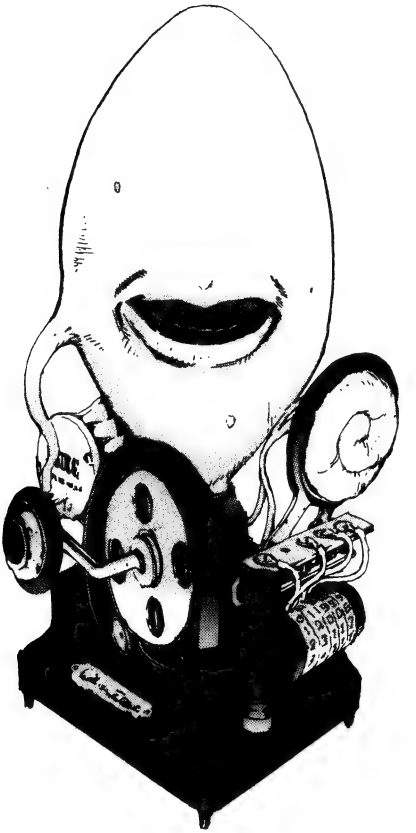

...A SOUND.
...MAKE...
...QUIETLY...
...THAT FLOW...
...EVEN TEARS...
SOUND...
...WHISPERING...
...QUIETER THAN...
THERE IS A MELODY...
FIRST WE HAVE TO START FROM THERE...


TOGETHER WITH THE "VICTIMS" OF THE KING OF BANDITS...
...FROM THERE...
IT'S JUST AS HE SAID...
HAVING IT STOLEN BY THE KING OF BANDITS...
...IS DESPAIR.

...LOOKS LIKE HOPE...
...THAT DESPAIR...
BUT STRANGELY...

Jing Will Return
in Volume 7!

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE, JING...
...EXCEPT IT'S CALLED "THE BOTTOM OF BLACK VELVET"... OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.



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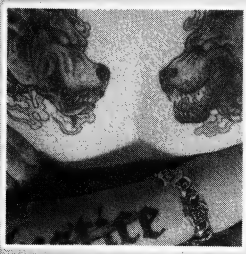

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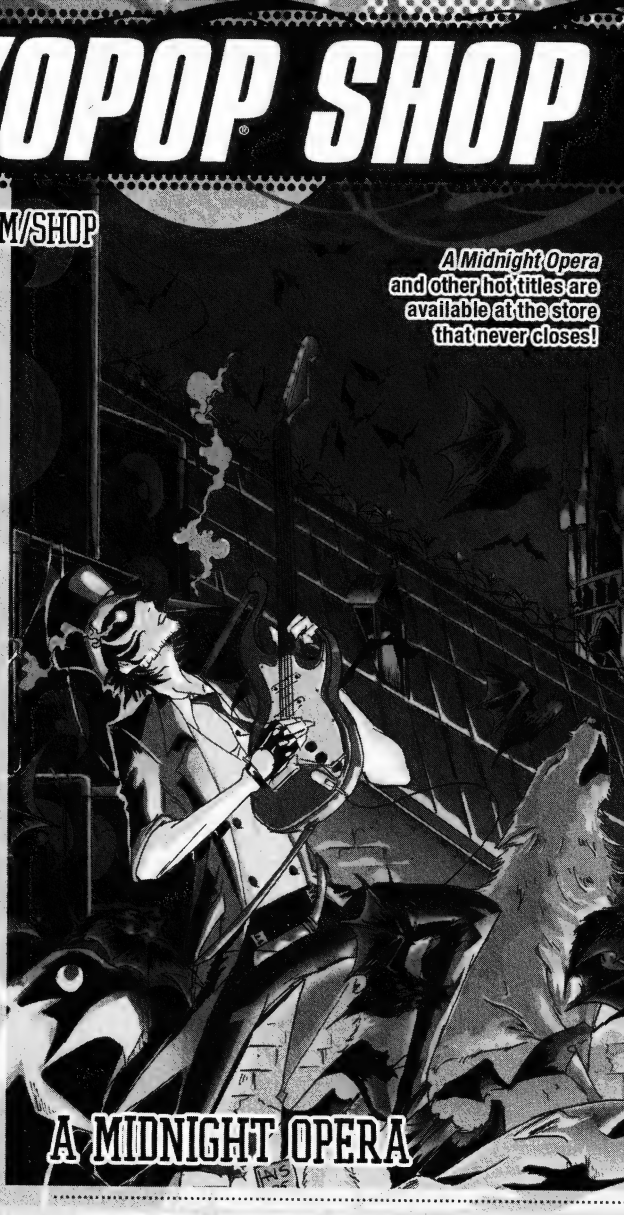

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AGE 13+
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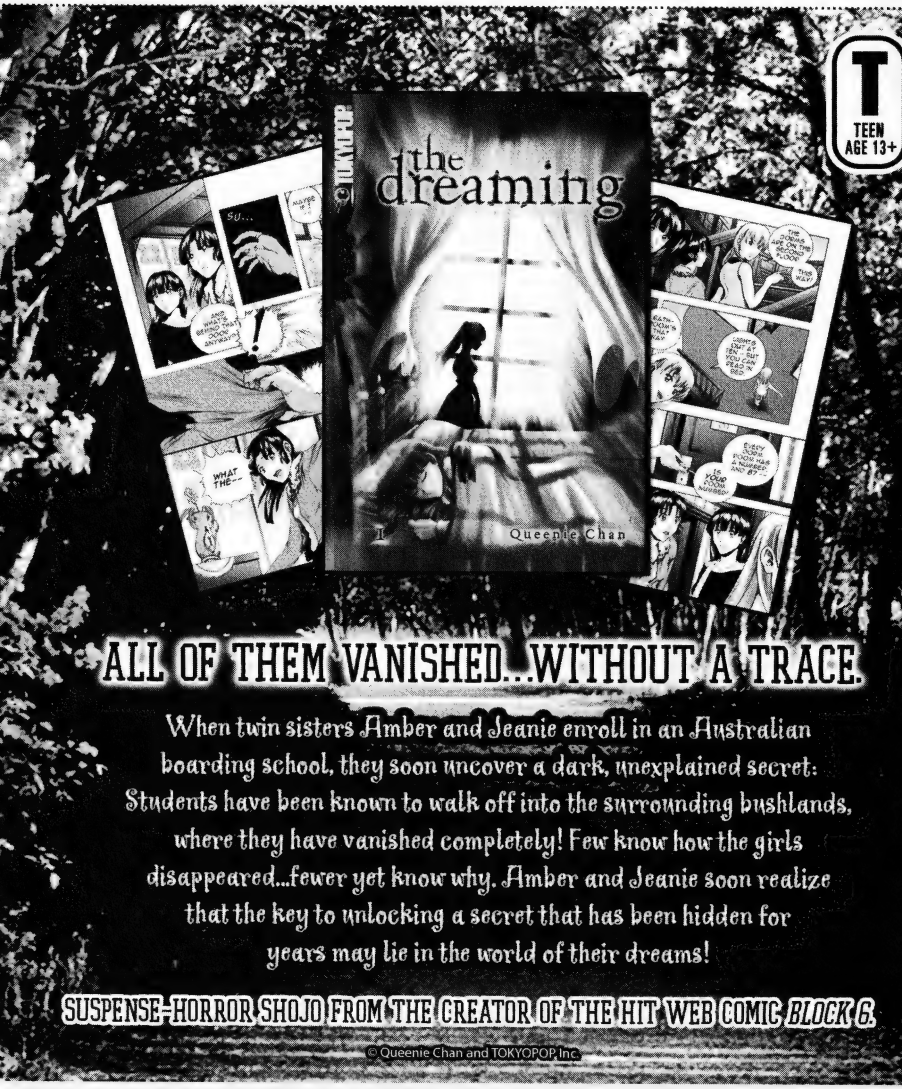
THE DREAMING

BY QUEENIE CHAN


T
TEEN
AGE 13+
the dreaming
TOKYOPOP
I
Queenie Chan
ALL OF THEM VANISHED...WITHOUT A TRACE.
When twin sisters Amber and Jeanie enroll in an Australian boarding school, they soon uncover a dark, unexplained secret: Students have been known to walk off into the surrounding bushlands, where they have vanished completely! Few know how the girls disappeared...fewer yet know why. Amber and Jeanie soon realize that the key to unlocking a secret that has been hidden for years may lie in the world of their dreams!
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BY SANG-SUN PARK

THE TAROT CAFÉ

I was always kind of fond of *Petshop of Horrors,* and then along comes *The Tarot Café* and blows me away. It's like *Petshop,* but with a bishonen factor that goes through the roof and into the stratosphere! Sang-Sun Park's art is just unreal. It's beautifully detailed, all the characters are stunning and unique, and while at first the story seems to be yet another Gothy episodic piece of fluff, there is a dark side to Pamela and her powers that I can't wait to read more about. I'm a sucker for teenage werewolves, too.

~Lillian Diaz-Pryzbyl, Editor

BY SVETLANA CHMAKOVA

DRAMACON

I love this manga! First of all, Svetlana is amazing. She's the artist who creates "The Adventures of CosmoGIRL!" manga feature in *CosmoGIRL!* magazine, and she totally rules. *Dramacon* is a juicy romance about a guy and a girl who meet up every year at a crazy anime convention. It grabbed me from the first panel and just wouldn't let go. If you love shojo as much as I do, this book will rock your world.

~Julie Taylor, Senior Editor

The Tarot Café © Sang-Sun Park/SIGONGSA. Dramacon © Svetlana Chmakova and TOKYOPOP Inc.

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PSY-COMM

BY JASON HENDERSON, TONY SALVAGGIO AND SHANE GRANGER

In the not-too-distant future, war is entertainment—it is scheduled, televised and rated. It's the new opiate of the masses and its stars are the elite Psychic Commandos—Psy-Comms. Mark Leit, possibly the greatest Psy-Comm of all time, will have to face a tragedy from his past...and abandon everything his life has stood for.

War: The Ultimate Reality Show!

T TEEN AGE 13+

© Yasutaka Tsutsui, Sayaka Yamazaki

TELEPATHIC WANDERERS

BY SAYAKA YAMAZAKI AND YASUTAKA TSUTSUI

When Nanase, a beautiful young telepath, returns to her hometown, her life soon becomes more than unsettling. Using her telepathic powers, Nanase stumbles across others who possess similar abilities. On a train she meets Tsuneo, a man with psychic powers who predicts a dire future for the passengers! Will Nanase find her way to safety in time?

A sophisticated and sexy thriller from the guru of Japanese science fiction.

OT OLDER TEEN AGE 16+

© Koge-Donbo

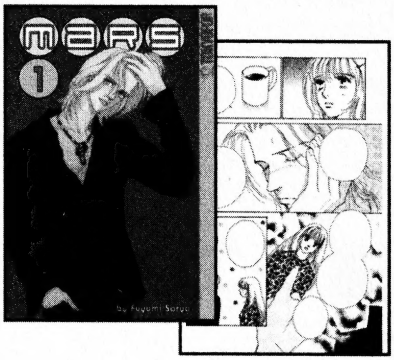
PITA-TEN OFFICIAL FAN BOOK

BY KOGE-DONBO

Koge-Donbo's lovable characters—Kotarou, Misha and Shia—are all here, illustrated in a unique, fresh style by the some of the biggest fans of the bestselling manga! Different manga-ka from Japan have added their personal touch to the romantic series. And, of course, there's a cool, original tale from Koge-Donbo, too!

***Pita-Ten* as you've never seen it before!**

T TEEN AGE 13+

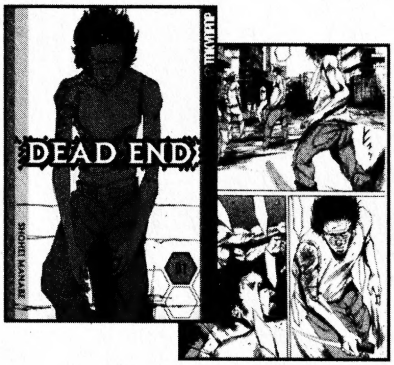


BY FUYUMI SORYO

MARS

I used to do the English adaptation for *MARS* and loved working on it. The art is just amazing—Fuyumi Soryo draws these stunning characters and beautiful backgrounds to boot. I remember this one spread in particular where Rei takes Kira on a ride on his motorcycle past this factory, and it's all lit up like Christmas and the most gorgeous thing you've ever seen—and it's a factory! And the story is a super-juicy soap opera that kept me on the edge of my seat just dying to get the next volume every time I'd finish one.

~Elizabeth Hurchalla, Sr. Editor



BY SHOHEI MANABE

DEAD END

Everyone I've met who has read *Dead End* admits to becoming immediately immersed and obsessed with Shohei Manabe's unforgettable manga. If David Lynch, Clive Barker and David Cronenberg had a love child that was forced to create a manga in the bowels of a torture chamber, then *Dead End* would be the fruit of its labor. The unpredictable story follows a grungy young man as he pieces together shattered fragments of his past. Think you know where it's going? Well, think again!

~Troy Lewter, Editor

MARS © Fuyumi Soryo All Rights Reserved. Dead End © Shohei Manabe

© Rivkah and TOKYOPOP Inc.

STEADY BEAT

BY RIVKAH

"Love Jessica"... That's what Leah finds on the back of a love letter to her sister. But who is Jessica? When more letters arrive, along with flowers and other gifts, Leah goes undercover to find out her sister's secret. But what she doesn't expect is to discover a love of her own—and in a very surprising place!

Winner of the Manga Academy's Create Your Own Manga competition!

T TEEN AGE 13+

© MIN-WOO HYUNG

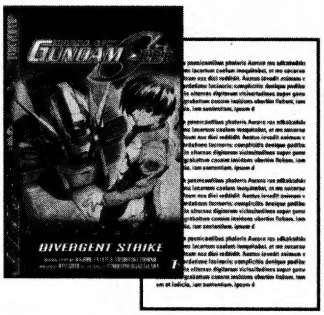
JUSTICE N MERCY

BY MIN-WOO HYUNG

Min-Woo Hyung is one of today's most talented young Korean artists, and this stunning art book shows us why. With special printing techniques and high-quality paper, TOKYOPOP presents never-before-seen artwork based on his popular *Priest* series, as well as images from past and upcoming projects *Doomslave, Hitman* and *Sal.*

A spectacular art book from the creator of *Priest!*

T TEEN AGE 13+



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MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED NOVEL

ORIGINAL STORY BY HAJIME YATATE AND YOSHIYUKI TOMINO
WRITTEN BY LIU GOTO

A shy young student named Kira Yamato is thrown in the midst of battle when genetically enhanced Coordinators steal five new Earth Force secret weapons. Wanting only to protect his Natural friends, Kira embraces his Coordinator abilities and pilots the mobile suit Strike. The hopes and fears of a new generation clash with the greatest weapons developed by mankind: Gundam!

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T TEEN AGE 13+

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YUICHI KUMAKURA

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王ドロボウJING

KING OF BANDITS

Welcome to Merry Widow, a strange town based around all things music. There, Jing and Kir plan to steal the Invisible, a mysterious instrument that can only be heard and never seen. As difficult as the mission appears to be, Jing and Kir face a greater challenge with Alize, a young girl who seeks vengeance upon the city's ruler. But she leads the duo on a mission that could be the ultimate end for our king of bandits...

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